Mysteries of Godliness

Horatio G. Kern

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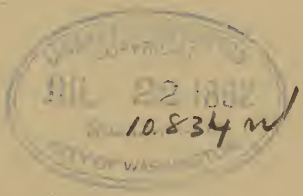
MYSTERIES OF GODLINESS.

BY

HORATIO G. KERN.

"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness."—1 Tim. iii. 16.



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PREFACE.

The main matter of this volume, and indeed all of it except these few sentences of Preface, was submitted to the notice of a life-long friend in the merest condition of lead-pencil scrawling, presenting the thoughts of an unpretentious layman upon subjects interesting to every one of us, and which intrude daily upon tens of thousands of his neighbors and acquaintances, who have not time nor the facilities to consider them duly, and yet whose interpretation and application form a grave portion of the needs of the hour.

The obvious intention of the work appeals to our hearty respect. He recounts the "mysteries" which have beset him, and reports his solution of them, or at least his mitigation of their worst disturbance. With his own wounds healed, he acts the part of the good Samaritan, not only upon recreant passers-by but on all who will look and listen.

This modest way of "doing good" wears true

philanthropy's rare stamp, which finds its just return collateral with its labor; it goes home "justified" by the time of sunset, and wakes to new labors of love on the morrow.

This small volume will hardly find its way immediately to our hosts of readers in America; but its circulation once begun will spread, and occupy for the hour space not likely to be better filled. It has a pleasant familiarity which assumes to meet our dogma of equality at least half-way, either journeying or at work, and to be the voice of that model wayfaring man to whom long ago was vouchsafed the power to understand the Scriptures. Let us make his hearty faith contagious, and thus spread the exceeding peace which comes of true believing.

H. C. O.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
INTRODUCTION	7
ETERNITY	14
TRINITY OF THE DEITY	19
IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL	27
ORIGINAL SIN	35
ATONEMENT	50
GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY AND MAN'S FREE AGENCY	82
RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD	102
CHRIST'S RESURRECTED BODY	120
JUDGMENT	127
CONSUMMATION OF THE AGES	150
CONCLUSION	165

INTRODUCTION.

EVERY observant and intelligent mind must have noticed "in the signs of the times" for the last two decades an extraordinary spirit of inquiry after truth. This is seen in the whole realm of thought, whether among scholars or laymen. Men's minds have been turned in a most remarkable manner to the pursuit of truth. Especially is this the case in the domain of religious thought.

The geologist has gone forth with hammer in hand, breaking the flinty rock that it may give up its secrets which have been hidden for ages; and he comes back with the wonderful discovery that this earth is some fifty or sixty millions of years old, which so alarmed some good old-fashioned people that they betook themselves to their Bibles, and exclaimed, "Not so, for the Bible says the world was made in *six days*, and was created only six thousand years ago;" and it seemed at the time

that the geologist's hammer was likely to knock the props from under the former belief in the Bible account of the creation.

But after recovering their equanimity and reading again more carefully they discovered that the Bible does *not* say that the earth is only six thousand years old, but that "In the *beginning* God created the heavens and the earth." *When* that beginning was is not stated. But it does say God made the world in six days, "And He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made."

Here, again, was another seeming difficulty to reconcile with the obtrusive and positive geologist. But by reading again it is seen that the Bible does not say that the world was made in six consecutive days of twenty-four hours each, but the "evening and the morning were the first day," etc., which may mean periods or ages of time of millions of years each; and so the fears of timid Christian people were quieted, and the good old book remains unharmed.

We would just here remark that while the Bible mentions six distinct days or periods of time in the formation of the earth, and marks each day by the expression "the evening and the morning were the

sixth day," etc., "He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made," there is no mention made of the evening and the morning being the seventh day; therefore it is plain that the seventh day began when He had finished the work of creation, and we are living in the seventh day.

Again, the scientist has found out that all matter is changeable or transmutable; that the earth brings forth grass, which the ox eats, and the grass becomes beef, which man eats, and it becomes other flesh; then man dies, and the earth gets its own again; and so on, in an endless, ever-changing round, this transmutation of matter proceeds *ad infinitum.*

So the believer in the resurrection of the body is perplexed again, and does not know what to say. But some careful readers of the Scriptures fail to find any definite statement that the material body will rise again; but it is positively stated that the "spiritual" body will be raised. This subject is treated of at length under the caption of the "Resurrection."

The doctrine of election and reprobation, held by some of the adherents of CALVIN, has been a

stumbling-block for centuries in the way of some for not believing in the teachings of the Bible. They say, "Can God be partial? and if so, it makes no difference what I do. If I am to be saved I will be saved, and if I am to be lost I will be lost, without any agency of mine in the matter."

To all such casuists the author has endeavored to reconcile this difficulty, and trusts all who will read dispassionately the dissertation on "God's Sovereignty and Man's Free Agency" will accord his assent to the conclusions arrived at, viz., that man is a free agent, and therefore responsible for his acts, and that his salvation depends upon his choice and actions.

There are others who see that there are incongruities in what is called the "Athanasian Creed,"—of the Trinity of the Godhead,—which affirms that there are three *distinct persons* in the Godhead, and yet these three are one.

To most minds who are accustomed to think closely there is an apparent incongruity in this statement of the creed. The Bible nowhere says that there are three separate *persons* in the Godhead, but *one God* with three hypostatic manifestations.

This subject is treated under the caption of the "Trinity of the Deity," to which the reader is referred, in the hope that he may have his objections appeased by a somewhat different presentation of the mystery of the Godhead; for we hold that there is no mystery revealed to us in the Bible which, by a proper study and with the illumination by God's Spirit, cannot be made plain to our comprehension. The Bible is God's Word; God is truth itself; therefore it must be consistent with itself, as all truth is so.

Then, again, the modern materialist has revived the old hypothesis of the Hindoos and the Greeks that matter is eternal, and therefore there is no creator or first cause; that matter is the aggregation of atoms brought together by chance, which by an inherent principle in themselves formed the worlds and established laws without a law-giver, and that there is no hereafter, that the soul dies with the body, and therefore death ends all.

All those who hold such views are referred to the argument for the "Immortality of the Soul."

But there is a still more subtle form of infidelity called "Agnosticism," which apparently admits the teachings of the Bible with mental reservation, and

its followers may be called honest doubters, who would believe if they had the demonstration. It is to this class of persons particularly that the author of this little book earnestly hopes to render some service, by the blessing of God upon his feeble efforts in removing their honest doubts.

There are some credulous minds that can believe almost anything upon plausible testimony; to such Christ said, "Blessed are they who believe;" but there are some doubting Thomases whose minds are so constituted that they cannot believe without seeing for themselves. And this is not to be wondered at in regard to spiritual truths, for the reason that some of the dogmas of the church are hard to reconcile with reason; and we hold that unless theology can be made to harmonize with reason, and science, and Scripture it is not truth, and the minds of thinking men will ever antagonize against a religion that is not consistent with reason; it will not do any longer for theologians to demand faith inconsistent with reason. Faith soars above reason, but God does not require in us faith contrary to reason.

The author has for years been impressed with

the belief that there is a want existing of a hand-book setting forth in a concise though homely way the mooted doctrines held by the church, such as a layman can read in a short time and understand without having to spend years of severe and tedious reading of lengthy volumes, elaborately written by schoolmen, on the various themes of theology, for which few active business men have the inclination or the time. It is to supply this want, and with an earnest desire to induce this class of persons to consider these great questions for themselves, which are so intimately connected with their eternal destiny, that has induced the author to issue this little volume on the "Mysteries of Godliness," for which he bespeaks a candid and dispassionate reading.

It is possible this book may fall into the hands of some theologian, who may find some views set forth therein which he will object to; but as the author is a layman writing to laymen, he indulges the hope he will not be judged too harshly, especially when the critic is advised that it was written in such moments of time as he could seize from an active business life.

ETERNITY.

ETERNITY! stupendous thought! There is no word or thought, except Eternal God, that can be compared with it in expanse of meaning or reach of thought. The finite mind, unaided by revelation, cannot comprehend it. The nearest approach ever made by human reason to it was by the ancient philosophers, who represented Eternity by a circle; but this comes far short of conveying a correct idea of Eternity, for the least departure from the centre would be an equal advance towards the circumference. An infinite circle, with a centre everywhere and circumference nowhere, would better express it.

The human mind alone, unaided by revelation, has never conceived the true idea of Eternity. Placed as man is on the earth, with its periodic revolutions marking time, it is exceedingly difficult for him to disassociate himself from its surroundings. If there were no earth, sun, moon, or heavenly bodies, there would be no measurement of time,

no past, no future, no years, no days, no moments of passing time, just as it was before the creation of the heavenly bodies, whose revolutions began the measurement of time. Beyond that the most remote period to the infinite mind might be considered as the *present moment.* There is no time with God but the ever-present *now:* "A day with Him is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

When Moses was commissioned by God to go into Egypt and deliver the Israelites from bondage, he demanded of God that He should tell him what name he should give as his authority to act as their deliverer; then God out of the burning bush announced to Moses His incommunicable name, "*I Am that I Am*" (Ex. iii. 14), which implies His Self and Eternal existence. If there were no other evidence of the Divine origin of the Bible, this unique expression of His name would be sufficient. Again, in John vii. 58, we read that Jesus, in answering the cavils of the Jews concerning His oneness with the Father, uses like words in speaking of Himself: "Before Abraham was *I Am.*" Mark, He does not say before Abraham was I was, but "before Abraham was *I Am.*" And it is a noticeable fact that

Christ when speaking of Himself almost invariably uses the present tense. Keeping this in view, it will enable us to interpret many passages of Scripture which otherwise would be inexplicable. The Prophets also frequently use the present tense in predicting events which were to occur hundreds of years in the future, as already being accomplished; for instance, Isa. ix. 6, "For unto us a Child *is* born, unto us a Son *is* given;" and many others might be adduced.

In view of what we have said, we come to the conclusion that Eternity is an ever-present *Now*, and will not admit of a past or future, or else we are driven to the only alternative, that there was a Beginning and an End, for there could be no past without a future, no beginning without an end, and no end without a beginning. So, we repeat, the idea of an Infinite *Now* could only originate with an Infinite mind, and is beyond and above the conception of finite mind, and proves conclusively the Divine origin of the Bible. Let the skeptic cavil at it as much as he will, let him show in the annals of the human race where any people or race, unaided by Revelation, even conceived the true idea

of Eternity. They have always associated in their minds a *past* and *future*. Such an idea as a present, without a past or a future, never entered into the mind of man, and never would have been but for the Revelation of God to man, as in the announced name, "I Am that I Am." If, then, Eternity is an Infinite *Now*, as we think we have shown in the foregoing remarks, should it not finally put to rest the controversies of the present day about the endless punishment of the wicked? Because, if Eternity is an ever-present *Now*, it of course follows, *a priori*, there can be *no End*. Consequently, if the wicked are punished at all, it must be *endlessly*.

How should the thought of an Eternal, unchanging Holy God, "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever," who cannot look upon sin with any degree of allowance, fill our souls with a profound sense of the majesty of His greatness and the perfection of His being,—the Supreme Ruler of the universe, who from His throne, surrounded with light inaccessible and full of glory, beholding all the dwellers upon earth, supplying by His providential care all their needs, God over all, blessed forever! As the profound Pascal has truly said, "God is the

centre of all, and to Him everything points, and he who knows Him not, knows nothing of the economy of this world and of himself. In Him is treasured up all our happiness, our virtue, our every life and light and hope; and out of Him there is nothing for us but sin, misery, darkness, and despair."

The foregoing thoughts are beautifully expressed by the Poet:

"O Thou Eternal One! whose presence bright
All space doth occupy, all motion guide;
Unchanged through Time's all-devastating flight;
Thou only God! There is no God beside!
Being above all beings! Mighty One!
Whom none can comprehend and none explore;
Who fill'st existence with Thyself alone:
Embracing all—supporting—ruling o'er—
Being whom we call God—and know no more!
. . . What am I, then?
Naught! Yet the effluence of Thy light divine,
Pervading worlds, hath reached my bosom too;
Yes, in my spirit doth Thy Spirit shine,
As shines the sunbeam in a drop of dew.
Naught! but I live, and on hope's pinions fly
Eager toward Thy presence; for in Thee
I live, and breathe, and dwell, aspiring high,
Even to the throne of Thy divinity.
I am, O God! and surely Thou must be!"

TRINITY OF THE DEITY.

THE doctrine of the Trinity of the Deity is a profound Mystery, and is inexplicable to the finite mind, and must ever remain so, for the reason that the finite cannot comprehend the infinite. Men have convened in council and formulated what is called the "Athanasian Creed," and as the result of their deliberations have given to the world the following utterances, viz.: "There is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost.

"The Father is God and Lord, the Son is God and Lord, and the Holy Ghost is God and Lord; but yet there are not three Gods and Lords, but one God and Lord; because, as we are compelled by Christian verity to confess each person singly God and Lord, so we are forbidden by the Catholic religion to say three Gods or three Lords."

Now it is evident from the apparent incongruities contained in this creed that its authors did not fully

understand the subject, for they tell us there are three separate, distinct *personalities* in the Godhead, and yet these three are *one*,—a manifest incongruity, if not an absurdity. The Word of God does not teach that there are three distinct, separate personalities in the Godhead, but *One*, the I Am (Jehovah) (Eph. iv. 4–6). "There is one body, and *one* Spirit, one Lord, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." That is, oneness with three essentials of nature, or with three Hypostatic manifestations, viz., Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; that is, three subsistences, not three Metaphysical existences; for if there be three personal, metaphysical existences there must be three Gods, which is contrary to the plain teaching of the Scriptures. The passage in 1 John v. 7, "There are three that bear record in heaven, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," is conceded by the best Biblical scholars to be an interpolation (which in the revised version is omitted), and does not affect what we have said. Christ, when in the flesh, although having a dual nature, viz., the human and divine, was God manifested in the flesh (1 Tim. iii. 16), and we are told in Col. ii. 9, "In Him dwelt

all the fulness of the Godhead Bodily." Christ, in speaking of His divinity to His disciples, tells them that "I and my Father are *one*" (John x. 30). John xiv. 8, 9: "Philip said unto him, Show us the Father and it sufficeth us." He replies, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

These are words too plain to admit of any doubt as to His divinity. But some will say, Did not He use the term My Father, and your Father, My God, and your God, when speaking of Himself to His disciples? Yes; but it was His *human* speaking to His divine, as instanced in His prayers in Gethsemane, and in the agonies of the cross, when He broke forth in the exclamation, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me;" and after having accomplished His mediatorial work, Glorified His human (John xvii. 5; xiii. 31, 32), and ascended to His throne of Glory, which He had with the Father before the foundation of the world.

Now, although we may not be able fully to comprehend the mystery of the Godhead, yet we may by the analogies in nature get a faint glimpse of

God in His works; for there is running through all the creation of God in nature an analogy with the spiritual, as St. Paul tells us in Rom. i. 20: "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and *Godhead.*"

Now if we interpret *invisible* things to mean *spiritual* things, and things that are made *material* things, we see clearly that we can understand spiritual things by material things, and we shall see, if we examine into the nature of material things, a close analogy to spiritual things.

Thus a few examples will show us that every perfect thing in nature which God has made is constituted of three elementary principles or laws, whether animate or inanimate.

Beginning at the lowest order, that which is called inanimate matter, we have Solids, Fluids, Gas; rising one step higher to what is called animate nature,—the tree or fauna of the earth,—the trunk, sap, flower or fruit; ascending one step higher into the animal kingdom (man, for instance), Body, Soul, and Spirit; then in the do-

main of Metaphysics (mental faculties), feeling, thought, and will. In sound there are three concordant chords, viz., fundamental, the third, and fifth, by the transposition of which all harmony is made. In color we find three primary colors, viz., Red, Yellow, and Blue, by the intermixture of which all colors are made.

The atmosphere we breathe has a triplicity of elements, viz., Oxygen, Hydrogen, and Nitrogen; Electricity, Positive, Negative, and the Electric Spark. The whole universe is controlled by three forces, viz., Centripetal, Centrifugal, and Equilibrium, or Attraction, Repulsion, and Equilibrium.

Thus we might go on multiplying analogies through all created things, showing there is a trinity in every thing in nature up to Nature's God. We submit, do not the foregoing thoughts aid us in some measure to comprehend the Trinity of the Godhead?

Would it not be strange if God were not reflected in His works, and does not the Scripture we have quoted from—Rom. i. 20—clearly teach us that we can understand the spiritual by material things, even somewhat of the mystery of the Trinity of the Godhead,—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

We repeat, there is in the Trinity of the Godhead oneness, with three essentials of nature, or a trinity of Hypostatic Subsistences, corresponding to the constitution of man, viz., Body, Soul, and Spirit, which without either essential would not be man. Man cannot perform any act without the concurrent function of the three essential elements of his nature. If we consider man in his spiritual nature we still have three essentials, viz., feeling, thought, and will; without the concurrence of these three no action or result would follow and he would be a nonentity.

Christ's method of imparting spiritual instruction to His disciples was by *parables* drawn from nature (Matt. xiii. 10, 11): "And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto *you* to *know* the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." And we hold that it is the privilege of every disciple of Christ to *know* the mysteries of Godliness if he applies himself to earnest and prayerful study of God's Word. "For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but

whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath."

Prof. T. Christleib, of Bonn Theological University (to whom we are under obligation for some of the thoughts in the foregoing article), has given an excellent summary of the Trinitarian doctrine of Scripture in his work on "Modern Doubt," which in closing this dissertation we copy *verbatim:*

"The Trinitarian doctrine of Scripture is briefly this: The Father is simply God, the God, the divine Subject, the Source and well-spring of the Godhead, of both Son and Holy Spirit; the Son is God, true God, in Hypostatic distinction, though derived from the Father; and the Spirit is also truly God, in a form which is predicated of the whole divine nature, for God is a Spirit (John iv. 24), and the Lord is the Spirit (2 Cor. iii. 17), but also in Hypostatic distinction from the Father and the Son, by whom He is sent and from whom He proceeds. There is, therefore, at once the most essential unity and a threefold Hypostatic distinction. The divine nature remains undivided; the whole Godhead is in the Son, and in the Holy Spirit,—in the Son (*Logos*) as God's own self, utterance, and in the Spirit as the

divine self-consciousness. And as the Son is the uttered thought of the Father concerning Himself, so it is again His office to speak out into the world the Father's thoughts of creation and redemption, and thus to stand to the creatures generally, and especially to mankind, in an original archetypal relation (John i. 4). And finally, as the Son is thus the archetypal and ideal principle of mediation between God and the world, of creation and of redemption, so the Holy Spirit is the real or efficient principle, affecting and individualizing all the creative and redemptive energies of the Father and the Son, applying, for instance, to each individual believer the Justification ideally (*i.e.*, in the idea or thought of God) accomplished by the Son, and so effecting a *real* sanctification and regeneration (Eph. ii. 18; 1 Cor. xii. 3), in which process He takes, indeed, everything from the Son, the real and actual having always the ideal and transcendant for its ultimate ground and condition."

IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

Every thoughtful and observant mind must have noticed everywhere in nature a most marvellous, persistent struggle for life. We see this exemplified from the lowest form of life in nature to the highest. How tenaciously the lichen clings to the barren rock, or the sponge to the bottom of the sea. Ascending to the seed-germ, how careful has the Author of all life provided against the destruction of the life-germ by encasing the seed in a cyst or shell, as is seen in a grain of wheat, the acorn, or the chestnut. So securely is the life-germ protected that a grain of wheat enwrapped in the cerements of the mummy for three thousand years, when planted in the ground, has germinated and reproduced its kind as well as if it were only a year old. In the animal kingdom we see the same instinctive and persistent struggle for life. We notice, furthermore, that the lower animals are happy and satisfied in their condition of life. They have all their instinctive cravings

gratified, and are as happy and contented as it is possible to be in their sphere of life.

Not so with man; he is peculiar to himself, discontented and dissatisfied in this life, and if there be no life beyond, he is of all God's creatures most miserable.

There is a universal aspiration in the breast of man for immortal life, whether Christian or pagan, as we see exemplified in the various races of man. The ancient Egyptians, believing in a future existence of the soul after the death of the body, built Pyramids, and embalmed the body with great care, so that it might endure for ages, agreeably to their belief that the soul would after thousands of years return to the body. There is no doubt the Pharaohs built the Pyramids to serve as secure places of sepulture for the bodies of the kings. The sacrifices of the pagans to propitiate their idol gods prove their belief in the future existence. The untutored savage has his belief in his future hunting-grounds. So we say there is an innate belief in a future state of existence which is universal to man, and we have Scripture for this assertion, as we read in Eccl. iii. 2, "God has set the world [*i.e.*, Eternity] in our hearts,"

and, we repeat, if death ends all, man of all God's creatures is the most miserable, and his life is a failure, and of all the rest of God's creatures comes short of his expectations in not fulfilling his innate and instinctive aspirations, which would be a libel on his maker. For if all the other creatures of God are fulfilling their destiny to complete and perfect satisfaction, can it be possible that man, made in the image of his maker, should be the only exception in God's creation who should come short? Impossible! It would be a libel on God's goodness and wisdom to suppose such an anomaly. Can it be possible that God has set in our hearts the idea of immortal life for the purpose of deceiving us? The very thought of such a thing is blasphemy against God.

It has been said that the sacred Scriptures do not give us any reliable information or positive proof of the immortality of the soul. This we hold to be a mistake. The Bible all through, from Genesis to Revelation, recognizes and treats of the spiritual world as an accepted reality, and, in fact, the only real *reality* is spirit life. "God (Spirit) created the Heavens and the Earth," as we have endeavored to

show at length in our article on "Christ's Resurrected Body," which the reader is referred to in this connection. But let us see if we cannot adduce some specific texts which will throw light more especially on this subject. First, we make mention of that memorable occasion when Christ took with Him three of His disciples, Peter, James, and John, as witnesses up the mountain where He was transfigured, and there appeared Moses and Elijah, who conversed with Him concerning His decease, which He was to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now, is this not a *positive* proof of the immortality of the soul? Moses and Elijah had been dead many centuries before this appearance on the Mount of Transfiguration, and yet we are told by three reliable witnesses that they conversed with Christ, and were recognized as the veritable Moses and Elijah,—Moses as the representative of the Law, Elijah the representative of the Prophets, and Christ the fulfilment of the Law and the Prophets; all three in consultation concerning the great work of salvation being wrought out through Jesus Christ. Here we have a remarkable instance of the natural and the spiritual worlds in conjunction. Will any one say this was a myth?

Again, in the Parable of Dives and Lazarus Christ lifts the veil which separates the natural world from the spiritual world, and gives us a picture of the condition of Dives and Lazarus as the representatives of the two classes of which mankind are composed, viz., the wicked and the Righteous; how one class are happy and the other class are miserable. Will any one have the hardihood to say this picture of the spiritual world is a myth, being told to us for the purpose of working on our fears, and deceiving us as regards a future state of existence?

Furthermore, we read in John xiv. 2, that Christ, just before His departure from the world, told His disciples, who were sorrowful on account of what He had informed them, that He was soon to leave them; comforts them with these words, "Let not your hearts be troubled; in my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you." He did not tell them to the contrary, therefore it must be so.

Furthermore, we are told in 2 Tim. i. 10, that "Christ hath brought life and immortality to light." All who believe in the divinity of Christ must ac-

knowledge His authority to speak of Eternal verities, coming as He did from His throne of glory, which He had with the Father before the world was created; and manifesting Himself in the flesh and dwelling among men as a Teacher sent from God to teach men the verities of the immortal life beyond, surely His authority cannot be gainsaid. Now, unless Christ was not qualified to speak of Eternal things, or that He did not speak the truth, which few (even who do not believe He is divine) will have the hardihood to affirm, we must accept His statement as the truth, or reject Him altogether as untrustworthy and a deceiver.

And yet, strange as it is, the great majority of mankind live and act as if there were no future life. Men are so engrossed in the affairs of this sensuous world that they do not think there is anything beyond that which their natural senses take in. They "do not like to retain God in their knowledge;" therefore we fear, as the apostle Paul said of the Romans, God will give them over to a Reprobate mind. "Oh, that men were wise, that they would consider their latter end" before it be everlastingly too late! "If a man die shall he live again," is one

of the most important questions that should engage the attention of man; and we think we have demonstrated in the foregoing argument that the soul is immortal, and does live after the death of the body, either in a state of perfect bliss or misery, according to the character (which is all he takes with him to the other life) which he builds up here, and that character is permanent, as is plainly exemplified in the parable of Dives and Lazarus heretofore alluded to.

And now, dear reader, let me remind you God has set before you life and death; there is no escaping this dilemma; either one or the other you are bound to choose, however indifferent you may be as regards your immortal destiny. Whatsoever things you sow you shall also reap, is an inevitable law of the natural and the spiritual worlds. "God would have all men to be saved;" and we read in 1 John v. 11, "God has given to us eternal life, and that life is in his Son." This is life eternal, that they may know thee and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. So we see that Eternal life is the free gift of God, and it only remains for us to receive it by faith in the finished work of Christ, wrought out on the cross on Calvary.

I entreat you, dear reader, to ponder over this subject of momentous issue. Accept Christ and gain immortal life, reject Christ and gain immortal death.

We read only of two declarations Christ will enunciate at the great day of Judgment: "Come ye blessed," "depart ye cursed;" there is no neutral ground to take. Christ says, "He that is not for me is against me." Suppose, for argument sake, that there is no hereafter, no life beyond, no Heaven, no Hell, that death ends all, that man dies like the beasts that perish, will not the believer in a future state of existence be as well off as the unbeliever? But if the converse be true, then,—and then,—oh, my God, what then!!!

ORIGINAL SIN.

ORIGINAL sin means simply the *first* sin. It is this first sin that was committed by our first parents in the garden of Eden that has caused so much disturbance in the moral world, and it has been an enigma ever since, and the subject has engaged the attention of the best minds in theological thought, without as yet arriving at a satisfactory solution of the problem, Why did God permit evil in the world?

We will now see if we can throw any light on this dark problem. In the first place, we would remark that God did not *create* evil, but that it was a result incidental to man's state of free agency; so if God did not create evil He is not the author of it, for evil, like darkness, is a nonentity. God created light, but not darkness, for darkness is nothing but the absence of light.

But some will say, Did not God know that man would fall into sin when He placed him in the garden? Yes, but that does not make God the author

of man's sin, no more than the maker of Guiteau's pistol was the author of Guiteau's crime. Besides, God warned Adam and Eve of the consequences that would follow any disobedience of His commands, and they having the choice of good and evil were responsible for their actions.

But why did not God make man *incapable* of choosing evil? We answer, Because if He had done so He could not have made man a free moral being, and then He could not have fulfilled the condition of man in the moral creation. The idea of man being a free moral agent without having the power of choice is not conceivable; it is this freedom of will which gives him the pre-eminence over the lower orders of God's creation, and lifts man up into conjunction and fellowship with God, thereby rendering him fit for companionship with God and capable of reciprocal affection; for how could there be reciprocity of love without free will? Love that is not spontaneous is not much esteemed. So we say that evil came into the world incidentally with man's freedom of will, and if man chooses to exercise his will in an evil direction it is not God's fault, because He gave him the power to choose between

good and evil. This subject is more fully treated under the caption of "God's Sovereignty and Man's Free Agency," to which the reader is referred.

Whatever may be the result of man's arguments concerning the admission of evil, the lamentable fact is universally admitted that evil does exist in the world in all its hideous forms.

Let us now address ourselves to the consideration of the consequences resultant from the transgression of God's commands. God gave permission to Adam to eat of the fruit of every tree in the Garden except one; but unfortunately he was not content until he had eaten of *all* the trees in the Garden. Gen. ii. 16, 17: "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

Adam and Eve did eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and this was the first sin that was committed in the world, and which has entailed so much misery on their descendants, and will continue to the end of time.

We see here that Adam's sin was *disobedience* to

God's commands, and it is a fact which every parent has noticed that the first sin his child commits is disobedience to his commands, and, in fact, it is the essence of all sin. This innate disposition to disobey superior authority is that which we inherit from Adam, and is what Theologians have called "Human depravity." Some say *total* depravity. Now, in order to enforce obedience it was necessary that laws should be established and penalties prescribed for the violation of law. God is a God of order, and there could be no order in man's condition of free will if there were no law to regulate that will, for the world has had demonstration that if man's selfish will be not curbed by law he would run riot in all manner of excess.

Another element in this sin of Adam we notice is *selfishness*. He had permission to eat of the fruit of all the trees in the garden except *One*. Ah, there it is, that one forbidden fruit. He must have *all*, not because he *needed* it, but only because his selfish heart desired it, and so it has been ever since. Man is not satisfied by having all that is required to make him happy, but he must have all he wishes, and that he never gets in this life, for Diogenes

would have to search longer with his lighted candle to find a perfectly *contented* man than to find an honest one. Alexander (whom the world calls great) was not content when he had conquered the world, but was made actually miserable because he had no more worlds to gain. It would be well for all covetous people to consider Christ's proposition, "What doth it profit a man if he should gain the whole world and lose his soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

It was for the purpose of checking this disposition in man to covet his neighbor's goods that God put in the tables of the moral law the tenth commandment: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's." (Ex. xx. 17.)

We will now notice the penalty that was to follow upon the disobedience of God's commands, viz., "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

There have been two ways of explaining this passage, "in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt

surely die." It is well known that Adam did not die for several hundred years after he had eaten of the forbidden fruit; but some say that Adam became *mortal* on the day he sinned, and that if he had not sinned he would have been immortal, and that there would have been no death in the moral creation. But this notion cannot be correct, for geologists tell us that death did reign before Adam's fall. Furthermore, if it were not for death the Race would become so numerous in a few hundred years that the earth could not contain the people that would be born without crowding one another into the sea.

Again, this notion does not fully come up to the letter of the penalty, "in the *day* that thou *eatest* thou shalt *die*," when it is known he lived some hundreds of years afterward, and the earth had become largely populated with his descendants before he died. So we do not think that the penalty was *mortal* death.

The other notion held by some as to the kind of death that is meant (and which we think is the correct one) is *spiritual* death. "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." And so he did; the very moment he committed sin he died

spiritually,—*i.e.*, "dead in sin," as the Scriptures describes all sinners as being "dead in trespasses and sin;" and this is a more direful state to be in than to be under the sentence of mortal death, for the one pertains to this life only, while the other pertains to eternity. We will see this point more clearly when we contrast Adam's condition *in* Paradise and Adam's condition *out* of Paradise.

The whole race of Adam is comprised in two classes, viz., "dead in sin" and "alive unto God." While Adam was *in* Paradise he was alive unto God. How intimate his relations to God were while he was innocent of sin! How sweet the fellowship must have been when holding converse and communion with God, his Father, in the cool of the evening, daily, in the shady bowers of Eden, in blissful innocence enjoying the society of God, talking face to face with God, as a friend talketh with a friend! But oh, how changed his relations after he had committed sin! Then we see him skulking away and hiding himself from God in conscious guilt, fearing to meet Him, as he was wont to do, in the cool of the evening in friendly, social intercourse. What has produced this change? Why afraid of

God now? Ah, the truth must be told: Adam and Eve had sinned, and they were ashamed now to meet God, and, as is always the case with the sinner, he resorts to various futile subterfuges to hide his sins. He is ashamed now forsooth to meet God, "for I was naked." He did not know he was naked before he had sinned; while in a state of unconscious innocence there was no cause for shame, for there was nothing to be ashamed of. But as soon as he had fallen into sin, then he had abundant cause for shame. And is not this always the case with every sinner, until he becomes so habituated to sin as to lose all shame? The boy who chokes at the utterance of his first oath, if it be persisted in for a few years, will learn to swear with as much facility and as little shame as a parrot. Dear reader, let me warn you against the mere beginning of any evil habit; for it is habit that forms character, and character makes the man.

Again, there is an element of meanness in Adam's sin. He has not the manliness to acknowledge his guilt, but tries to shift the blame of it on another: hear his mean excuse, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I

did eat." Then, again, when the "Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." Here is human nature with all its meanness come down to us from Adam; and who does not know how prone we all are, when convicted of a fault, to charge the blame of it on some one else; and if that will not do we are sure to put the blame on the "Old Serpent!" Well, while we are free to admit the serpent may beguile us, we do not admit that we are compelled to yield to his seductions, for the reason that we are free agents, and we have it in our power to "resist the Devil, and he will flee from us;" and we can say to him, as Christ did, "Get thee behind me, Satan." Satan has no more power over us than that which we choose to give him by yielding to our own lusts. St. James tells us "Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed."

We wish just here to put in a disclaimer of the old theological dogma that in Adam's fall the whole race became totally depraved and impotent, for if that be the case man would be beyond recovery, and there would be no use to try to "*resist* the Devil,"

as we are enjoined to do. We inherit from Adam a depraved nature and a predisposition to evil, "we are prone to evil as the sparks to fly upwards," but not so totally depraved as to be incapable of making any effort to overcome our evil propensities, for we are enjoined in the Scriptures to "overcome evil with good," and, again, "cease to do evil and learn to do well." Now these injunctions would be sheer mockery if man had no power in himself to obey these injunctions. But a man may become so depraved by evil habits, so utterly under the control of his sensuous lusts, so enslaved to his carnal appetites as to render himself morally incapable of resisting the temptations of his besetting sins. "Ephraim is joined to his idols, let him alone." When a man gets into this state then he becomes totally depraved.

Another old-time notion which we wish to disclaim is, viz., that we are held responsible for *Adam's* sin; that if we had no sin of ourselves to answer for we would be judged for Adam's sin and consigned to perdition. This is horrible to think of, yet it is a doctrine which was formerly preached, but now happily discarded. The idea of infants dying before coming to years of discretion, not knowing good

from evil, going to hell for Adam's sin is revolting to all our finer sensibilities, and has no warrant in Scripture. We shall be judged for our own sins "according to the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or bad," but not for Adam's sin, much less for infants' unconscious sins, "for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Christ's atonement is complete satisfaction for Adam's sin.

We will now consider Adam's condition *out* of Paradise, and what a lamentable difference there is between his condition *in* Paradise and *out* of Paradise. As we have already seen, before he fell into sin he was as happy as he could be, enjoying the sweet delights of Eden in blissful innocence, in daily communion with God, his maker, having all his heart could wish; but now look at him: after his fall he was turned out of Paradise, dishonored of God and disgraced. We read the sad story in Gen. iii. 22, 24: "And the Lord God said, Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of

Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword, which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life."

Here we have depicted before us the baleful consequences of sin. And it is always so with every sinner; it separates from God; for there is no fellowship with holiness and sin, with Christ and Belial; light and darkness cannot exist together; therefore Adam and Eve are thrust out of Paradise and degraded to the dust, and "sent forth to till the ground from whence they were taken." And the sentence is, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." And this is what comes of listening to the wiles of the Devil. "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden. And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden, but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it; neither shall ye touch it lest ye die. And the serpent said unto

the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Yes, the devil told one fact incidentally, viz., their eyes were opened, and they knew for the first time what *evil* was to their bitter experience; and with this experience came conscience; for there could be no conscience until they knew the difference between good and evil.

Again, after God had expelled Adam and Eve from the garden, "He placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword, which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life."

Here we see in this picture God's Justice represented by a flaming sword, which turned every way to guard His Holiness from the intrusion of all that is sinful and unholy; for into His presence can enter "nothing that defileth or maketh a lie," as was instanced in the Tabernacle, "Holy of Holies." We learn also from this incident the sure retribution (Nemesis) that follows on the track of every sin. God's sword of vengeance turns every way, and there is no escaping its double edge, which "piercing

even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." God is holy, and He cannot look upon sin with any degree of allowance, and we may "be sure our sin will find us out." We have seen how futile were the attempts of Adam and Eve to cover up their shameful sin with fig-leaves, for "all things are open and naked to Him with whom we have to do."

Now let us look at the Mercy of God, and we will see the marvellous Grace which is displayed in this narrative of the fall. No sooner had man fallen from his pristine state of holiness and innocence than God interposed His Grace for his recovery in the Redemptive scheme. The seed of the woman who had listened to the seductive words of the wily tempter was to crush his head. So in due time Christ was born of a woman, and "came into the world to destroy the works of the Devil." And in Christ we have forgiveness and plenteous Redemption. Blessed be God! He has given us plenteous Redemption by the Vicarious sacrifice of His Son Jesus Christ, and recovered man from the spiritual death into which he had fallen by original sin, and lifted

man up again to that fellowship and conjunction with God which he had before the fall. But of course this restoration only pertains to those who by a living faith in Christ's merits and sacrifice rely wholly upon Him for their salvation. "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. vi. 23); and, again, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." (John xvii. 3.)

So we see, dear reader, there is no need to distress ourselves about Adam's sin, but our *own;* for we can get back all and more than was lost by the fall if we will simply cling to the cross of Christ, for in Him we have forgiveness and *plenteous redemption*, —Paradise lost, Paradise regained.

ATONEMENT.

THE atonement is the mystery of all mysteries. It is the one thing the Angels in heaven are deeply interested in, for we read in 1 Peter i. that the Apostle, in speaking of the great salvation in Christ which was foretold by the prophet, and "which they had inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto them: Searching what, or what manner of time the spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; *which things the angels desire to look into.*"

Now if the holy angels are so interested in this great and all-absorbing subject as to "*desire to look into*" the same, surely it is a subject that we should

desire to contemplate, especially as we are the *subjects* of this great salvation which so interests the inhabitants of heaven.

Sometimes the etymology of words assists us in getting a clearer idea of the subject than we could get in any other way. The word "atonement" is made up of three syllables, viz., at-one-ment; the latter is derived from the Latin *mens*,—*i.e.*, the mind; so the primary meaning is *at one mind*, showing us by the etymology of the word that there has been some estrangement of mind to require an atonement or reconciliation.

Now this estrangement took place in the garden of Eden, when Adam and Eve committed the first transgression against God's commands, which is commonly called the "fall of man," because prior to this man was in communion and fellowship with God,—*i.e.*, of *one mind*. But as soon as he had sinned that oneness of mind, that comity of feeling, was disrupted, and the carnal heart of man became "enmity against God;" and, as a consequence, he was driven out of Paradise as a vagabond upon the face of the earth, dishonored and disgraced, and by nature ever since rebellious.

Now there was an insuperable breach made by man's fall; can it be that the devil should gain the ascendancy over God's fairest moral creation, made in His own likeness, to be recipients of God's love, and he in turn to reciprocate that love? What can the material creation render to God but a dumb obedience? The sun, moon, and stars praise Him, but there is no intelligent, conscious affection in them answerable to God's nature, whose essence is intelligent love.

How then can the breach be healed? How can man be restored to God's favor? How can man be Just before God? This is the question which engages the attention of the angels in heaven, and which they "desire to look into" with such absorbing interest. If it be not irreverent, we might depict in our imagination the Godhead in council concerning man's fall, and the means to be employed for his recovery, and the holy angels bending over with intense interest to see what plan was to be devised to redeem man from his ruined condition, when they overhear the Saviour say, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." So, when there was "no eye to pity and no arm to save," God, out of the pure en-

ergy of His love, gave Himself a ransom in the person of Jesus Christ, who, in the fulness of time, offered Himself a sacrifice for man's crime, and the problem of man's redemption was solved. Thus God can "be Just, and the Justifier of him who believeth in Jesus." Here is a scheme which only infinite Love and Wisdom could devise, and which angels and men wonder at, and will continue to do so until the secrets of God are revealed.

Concerning this scheme of Redemption, the great and puzzling question has been and is still objected to by the skeptic, viz., the innocent suffering for the guilty. They say, Can this be just? To this question we can only say that it is an unfathomable mystery, and can only answer, God has so appointed. Turn which way we will we are confronted with mysteries in nature. We cannot tell why it is that an acorn and a grain of wheat, having both the same constituent elements, how it is that the one should produce the towering oak, and the other a stalk of wheat. We can only say that God hath so appointed that the acorn should produce the oak, and the grain of wheat its kind,—"every seed his own body."

We see, also, all through the moral and the Physical creation this law of sacrifice, wherein the innocent suffer for the guilty to subserve some good end. We plough and harrow up the ground "that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater;" the smaller animals' lives are sacrificed to supply sustenance for the larger, and all are subservient to man for food and raiment. How often innocent children are called to suffer for the intemperate habits of their parents, wives for their husbands and husbands for their wives, and parents for their froward children; all these, and, in fact, all the ills of this life, are traceable to sin, and in the divine economy and in the nature of things call for sacrifice on the part of the innocent for the guilty, perhaps the only solution for which may be found in "final causes."

Having briefly stated the occasion of and the reason for an atonement, we will now consider the various aspects in which the Scriptures speak of the redemptive scheme.

The first feature we will notice is that Christ gave Himself up to die for our sins. We will quote some passages of Scripture bearing on this point: Rom. v. 6, 8, "When we were yet without strength, in due

time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." John xv. 12, 13, "This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Rom. viii. 32, "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" 1 Tim. ii. 56, "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all."

1 Peter iii. 18, "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." John iii. 16, "Thereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us." We might quote more passages to show that Christ died for our sins, but this will suffice.

We will next adduce some passages of Scripture to show that Christ died as *our substitute*, that is, in *our stead.* Death was the penalty that was to be inflicted on the sinner, but Christ assumed it in *our*

place. Matt. xx. 28, "The Son of Man is come, not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." 1 Tim. ii. 6, "He gave Himself a ransom for all." 2 Cor. v. 14, 15, "The love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge that if one died for all, then all died." Gal. iii. 13, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse *for us:* for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." 1 Peter iii. 18, "Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us unto God." Isa. liii. 58, "He was wounded for *our transgressions*, He was bruised for *our iniquities;* for the transgression of my people was He stricken." Thus it is plain from these few passages (out of many that might be quoted) that Christ died *for us* as *our substitute*, and that if He had not died for us no one could be saved.

We will now quote some passages of Scripture which speak of Christ as bearing our sins, and as "made sin," and made a curse for us. We have seen by the foregoing passages we have quoted that Christ died *for us;* it therefore follows as a corollary that He must have assumed our sins, therefore He is called in Scripture our sin-bearer.

We will only quote a few of this class, as the Scriptures abound with passages which represent Christ as "*Bearing our Sins.*" Thus we read in the Old Testament that it was prophesied by Isaiah, hundreds of years before Christ came into the world, that He would bear our sins. Isa. liii. 6, 11, 12, "The Lord *hath laid on Him* the iniquity of us all;" "by His knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for *He shall bear their iniquities;*" "He was numbered with the transgressors, and *He bare the sin of many.*" Now if we turn to the New Testament we see almost the same words used as by Isaiah. Heb. ix. 28, "Christ was once offered *to bear the sins of many.*" 1 Peter ii. 24, "Who His own self *bare our sins* in His own body on the tree."

There are many more passages in the Scriptures which speak of Christ as *bearing our sins*, but this will suffice to show this feature of the atonement.

Now, in what sense are we to understand that Christ did *bear our sins?* Was it out of sympathy for fallen man? or was it in the sense of sorrow for the *penalty* that was to be inflicted upon the sinner?

We think that there was an element of both sympathy and sorrow, on account of the penalty which

entered into this sin-bearing of Christ. For it must have been pure unalloyed sympathy which moved God, out of compassion for us in our helpless, fallen condition, to send His Son Jesus Christ into the world, and assuming our nature, "Made of a Woman." He became a man like one of us, that He might put Himself under all our conditions of existence, thereby realizing our infirmities; for He was tempted in all points as we are, "that He might know how to succor those that are tempted," having "a *fellow feeling* for us." Surely this implies sympathy and compassion. Then, again, this compassion for us prompted "Him to bear our sins in His own body on the cross," suffering the penalty of our sins in our stead; that is, He became our burden-bearer, the heavy load of guilt that would have crushed us He in compassion for us lifted from us and bore it for us. Here is an exhibition of sympathy and compassion such as the world has never seen before or since, and should call forth our gratitude to God for such unmeasured favor in our behalf.

Again, we read in 2 Cor. v. 21, that "He hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

By the expression, "He hath made Him to be sin for us," we are not to understand that Christ was "*made sin*" in the abstract sense; for that would be contradictory to the latter part of the sentence, "*who knew no sin;*" but we are to read it metaphorically, that is, in the sense that He was appointed to bear the burden of our sin, and to suffer the consequent penalty of sin. As St. Paul expresses it in Gal. iii. 13, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us."

Here we see clearly the vicarious sacrifice of Christ, who was innocent of sin, suffering for the guilty, "that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him;" that is, the righteousness that was in Him was imputed to us, who by faith in His merits trust in Him for deliverance from "the curse of the law, He being made a curse for us" by substitution.

We will now quote another class of passages, which speak of the remission of sins and deliverance from their penal consequences by the death of Christ.

Our Lord Jesus, just before His death on the cross, instituted the Lord's Supper, and at this sup-

per, with His disciples, in administering the cup, uses this language (Matt. xxvi. 28): "This is my blood of the new testament which is shed for many for the *remission* of sins," using the cup of red wine as an emblem of His blood, which He was about to shed for the remission of the sins of the world. It is hard to conceive how the Romish Church should so misconstrue this saying of Christ in their doctrine of Transubstantiation of the Eucharist in giving it a literal meaning, the absurdity of which is at once apparent when we consider that Christ used these words, "This is my blood of the new testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins," *before* He actually *had shed* His blood on the cross. How, I ask, can it be possible that the cup which He handed to His disciples did *really* contain *His blood* when He had *not as yet shed it?*

Again, we read in 1 John i. 9, that "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and Just *to forgive us our sins* and cleanse us from all unrighteousness;" and also, 1 John ii. 1, 2, "If any man sin *we* have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world."

Now we see in this passage quoted that by Christ's sacrificial death there is ample provision made for deliverance from the penalty due our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world, upon the condition that we *confess our sins.* Confession, which implies true repentance, is essential to forgiveness. It is well to remember this, for many think as the Universalists do, that Christ's mediatorial death made full provision for a universal salvation, for which notion there is no warrant in Scripture. The Scriptures all through insist upon Confession, Repentance, and faith in Christ as the only ground of forgiveness and hope of salvation; this is clearly seen by what Paul says in Rom. viii. 1, 3, 4: "There is now no condemnation *to them that are in Christ Jesus.*" "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit."

Thus we see that Christ's mediatorial sacrifice is only available for those that are in Christ Jesus; that is to say, they who are united to Him by a

living faith, and trust in His vicarious sacrifice for their salvation; to them there is no condemnation, for Christ bore the condemnation of our sins for us, for we were impotent to fulfil the requirements of the law by reason of our fallen nature; therefore God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, who fulfilled the demands of the law in our stead; and the righteousness which He fulfilled was imputed to us, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit, He having paid the penalty which our sins incurred.

Another class of passages of Scripture which we will notice speaks of Christ's death as a ground of Justification and Redemption. The first of this class we quote from is Isa. liii. 2: "By His knowledge shall my righteous servant Justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities." Also Rom. v. 8, 9: "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us; much more then, being now Justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him." Also Rom. iii. 24, 26: "Being Justified freely by the grace of God through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness, that He

might be Just, and the Justifier of him who believeth in Jesus."

There is very little difference between forgiveness and justification, and yet there is a nice distinction to be drawn between them: forgiveness implies that there is an accusation brought and trial had, and conviction obtained and sentence passed, and for which forgiveness is besought and confession of guilt made; but even when the crime is forgiven the guilt still remains, although the criminal is forgiven or pardoned.

Justification is a judicial term which implies that there has been an accusation made of crime, and the criminal is arraigned in court for trial, and the Judge, after hearing the statements of the cause, acquits the person as charged in the indictment, and he is liberated and discharged as innocent of the crime charged against him, and declared Justified before the law without condemnation.

Now Christ having borne our iniquities and delivered us from the wrath consequent upon our iniquities, has by His grace freely Justified us, "by His blood through the redemption, that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation

through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness, that He might be Just and the Justifier of him who believeth in Jesus," that "By the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto Justification, and by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." So we see that by the obedience of Christ in satisfying the demands of the law by making a propitiation for us, we by faith in Christ's mediatorial sacrifice have redemption and remission of all past sins, "being accounted unto Him for righteousness," as our substitute.

We would remark here that by faith we are justified and receive pardon of all *past* sins, but it does not include *future* voluntary sins, as some think, for there would be no use in our Lord's Prayer of the petition "Forgive us our debts" if all future voluntary sins were included in Justification. It is only while we *continue* in a lively exercise of faith that we are accounted righteous before God. And if we should relapse into unbelief then "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation," so that as long as we are in a state of probation we should "watch and pray that we enter not into temptation," "and

should look to ourselves that we lose not the things we have gained."

We will quote a few passages of Scripture which speak of Reconciliation to God by the death of Christ, and which represent His death as a propitiation for sin.

First we quote from 2 Cor. v. 18, 19, 20: "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

Reconciliation implies that there are two parties at variance or in disagreement, and in order to bring about perfect agreement one or both of the parties must be conciliated, and then they are said to be reconciled to one another; this is called reconciliation.

Now the passages which we have quoted from (2 Cor. v.) represent God as in the attitude of recon-

ciling His enemies unto Himself by Jesus Christ, and if there were no other passages which speak of God as being "angry with the wicked" we would have to conclude that man is the only party to be reconciled. Anger or revenge in the abstract sense is not to be imputed to God, for God is unchangeable and rules all things in undisturbed composure. But, speaking after the manner of men, there is a sense in which the Bible speaks of His wrath and anger (not that kind of wrath or anger which we poor weak mortals feel, and which so much disturbs our equilibrium). But as God is a person, it is conceivable that He has emotions somewhat akin to ours, *but free from any element of hatred or revenge.* It cannot but be that when He looks down from His throne of holiness upon the wickedness of His rebellious children He is moved with displeasure, for "He cannot look upon sin with any degree of allowance;" and also when He sees His believing children striving to overcome the evil temptations that beset them and live lives of holiness and obedience to His commands, that He is moved with pleasure, and His favor is bestowed upon them in an especial manner. "His tender

mercies are over all His works," to be sure, but that does not interfere with the exercise of His justice, for "Justice and judgment are the habitation of His throne." Therefore His justice and His righteous laws must be vindicated; crime, in the very nature of things, must be punished, and this is not inconsistent with His tender mercies, which are over all His works. We can, perhaps, make this plainer by taking, for instance, the case of a kind, loving, earthly father who has a wayward boy who has strayed away from his father's house into forbidden paths; the father is grieved and displeased with his son's frowardness, but he loves him still, although he hates his sins. And may it not be so with our heavenly Father? indeed, we know it is so from Christ's pathetic parable of the Prodigal Son, which represents God's attitude to His erring children as one of unspeakable tenderness and solicitude. "He would have all men to be saved," therefore "He so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son into the world, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life."

Thus God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, "not imputing their trespasses unto

them," and by the word of reconciliation which His ambassadors are still preaching does beseech us, in Christ's stead, to be reconciled unto God.

Now on the Godward side of this reconciliation between God and man we are told in the Scriptures that Christ is "our merciful and faithful high priest." "And He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world;" and again, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." 1 John ii. 2, 4, 10.

Now although, as we have seen in the foregoing argument, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself," yet we must admit that in the Scripture we have just quoted from (1 John) there is something more meant by Christ's acting as our merciful and faithful high priest (propitiating our sins) than reconciling the world unto Himself, for He is our high priest who propitiates the Father in behalf of us for the remission of our sins. Furthermore, Christ is spoken of in the Scriptures as our *advocate;* the last clause of the first verse of the chapter we have quoted reads thus: "If any man sin we have an *advocate with the Father*, Jesus Christ

the righteous." Now it is evident from the phraseology here employed that if Christ is our advocate with the Father, it is the Father who is to be impleaded or placated, or else why the need of an advocate?

So it is obvious that in the matter of reconciliation there is a Godward as well as a manward side, but that the main difficulty lies with the obstinacy of man's will and the hardness of his heart. Christ in His tender solicitude for man's salvation broke out in the pathetic words (while sitting on a hill overlooking Jerusalem), "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye *would not!*" Ah, here is the chief and sole difficulty in the way of reconciliation: "Ye *will not* come unto me that ye might have life!"

We will next notice some passages of Scripture which speak of Christ as a Priest, and as a representative; first we will quote Ps. cx. 4: "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." Also Heb. ii. 17:

"Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."

Here we have a statement that Christ's priesthood extends *forever* after the *order of Melchizedek*. Under the Levitical economy the order of the priesthood was confined to the line of Aaron and his sons, who alone were ordained to offer both gifts and sacrifices for man; but Christ's priesthood was of the order of Melchizedek, of the line of Shem, which had no descent, but ended with Melchizedek. So the analogy with the priesthood of Christ is striking, and if we knew more about Melchizedek it would perhaps be more so. Perhaps it would be profitable to contrast the offices of the Aaronic priesthood with the priesthood of Christ, that we may see more clearly the analogy between the type and the antitype.

Concerning the functions appertaining to the Levitical priesthood, we read in Heb. v. 1, that "Every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins."

Here we see that the function of the priestly office was to offer both gifts and sacrifices for the sins of the people, which was done daily in the Tabernacle and the Temple service. The offerings were of various kinds, either from the herd or flocks; the sacrifice was brought voluntarily to the door of the Tabernacle and presented to the priest, and, after the laying on of hands of the offerer and the priest, was slain; and the priest, on behalf of the offerer, offered it on the altar of sacrifice to God for the remission of the sins of the people. Thus we see that the priest offered both gifts and sacrifices.

Now this was all typical of Christ, our "merciful and faithful High Priest," who voluntarily became "an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building," and did offer up Himself in His own body on the Cross a sacrifice for the sins of the people, and by whom we have "eternal redemption."

We will next notice the perpetuity of Christ's priestly office. "Thou art a priest *forever* after the order of Melchizedek." The Aaronic priesthood came to an end when Christ's priesthood com-

menced, because the Aaronic priesthood was typical of Christ, being "a shadow of better things to come." But Christ's priesthood continues *forever*. "He ever liveth to make intercession for His people."

Some maintain that Christ was not a priest while He was upon earth, but only became a priest after His ascension into heaven, because forsooth He was not a descendant of Aaron; for in the Mosaic economy no one could exercise the office of a priest except he was of the lineage of Aaron. But they forget that Christ was a priest after the *order of Melchizedek*, and not of the order of Aaron. Besides, if Christ did not become a priest until after His ascension into heaven, the typical import of the Levitical ritual was not fulfilled, for the office of a priest was to offer both *gifts* and *sacrifices*. How, then, could Christ have fulfilled this condition of offering both gifts and sacrifices after he had *accomplished* His sacrifice? is there not an inconsistency here? We maintain that Christ did fulfil the conditions of a priest by giving His body a voluntary sacrifice on the cross, and by shedding His blood for the sins of the whole world, and after His ascen-

sion into heaven still continues to be our great High Priest, to whom alone we must come, and bring our sacrifices of praise, and thanksgiving, and prayer; and, as our merciful and faithful High Priest, will present the sacrifices of our hearts, which is a broken and contrite spirit, with the full assurance that He will not despise, for "He ever liveth at the right hand of God to make intercession for us."

The next and last feature of the atonement which we will notice is the great sacrificial character of Christ's death on the cross.

From the many passages of Scripture which speak of the (piacular) character of Christ's sufferings and death, we will quote from Heb. vii. 26, 27; ix. 12, 14, 22, 28: "Such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the people's; for this He did once, when He offered up Himself." "Not by the blood of goats and of calves, but by His own blood, He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes

of an heifer sprinkling the uncléan, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" "Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without the shedding of blood there is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: nor yet that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others; for then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once, in the end of the world, hath He appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." Also Heb. x. 11, 14: "Every high priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sin, for ever sat down

on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool: for by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."

As we have already observed, this system of sacrifice for sin seems to be inherent in the whole moral creation; and it can be traced back to Adam's time, for we read that Cain and Abel offered sacrifices; and in fact it is seen and reflected in the most ancient pagan rites; and it seems to have been an inherent principle in these sacrifices that blood must be shed in order to make an atonement. Why this was so we cannot say, except that God had so ordained it. We read that Cain's sacrifice was of the fruits of the earth and Abel's was of the firstlings of the flock, and that Cain's sacrifice was rejected, but that Abel's was accepted, because God had so appointed that "without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins." Hence the significance of the Mosaic sacrifices, which consisted mainly of the shedding of blood; thus we read in the passage just quoted that "almost all things were by the law purged with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no remission."

Some think that it was the want of faith on the part of Cain that was the reason why God did not have respect unto Cain's sacrifice as He had unto Abel's; but that cannot be so, for the reason that if Cain had no faith at all he would not have thought it necessary to offer any sacrifice. But we think the true reason why God did not accept Cain's sacrifice was because he did not bring a sacrifice agreeably to God's appointment, and therefore he was disobedient to God's command—the same disobedience as Nadab and Abihu were guilty of, by offering strange fire unto the Lord while they had explicit instructions to use no fire but that from off the altar. And so it is at the present time; many think they can come to God in some other way than by God's appointment; they think that by living moral lives they can go to heaven and be accepted of God, as Cain thought that by offering the fruits of the earth it would be as acceptable to God as by offering the firstlings of the flock, as God had commanded. Christ says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh to the Father but by me, and there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we can be saved but by me." This is God's appointed way of

saving men, and we may be sure that God's way is the best and the only way.

Now we can see the infinite superiority of Christ's sacrifice over the Levitical sacrifices, which only "sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh" "and did not make the offerers perfect;" "for the high priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, *which can never take away sins;*" so it must be remembered that these sacrifices were only patterns or types of the better sacrifice that Christ, our great high priest, was to offer for us. Furthermore, in the old Mosaic economy the high priest "offered daily the same sacrifices which can never take away sins," but Christ offered Himself *once* in the end of the world" (*i.e.*, the end of the Jewish dispensation): "hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." Again, the high priest entered once every year into the Holy of Holies to make an atonement for the people, after, first of all, he had made atonement for himself. But Christ, "our great High Priest, is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; nor yet that He should

offer Himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others; for then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world;" "but this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sin, forever sat down on the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made the footstool of His feet: for by one offering He hath *perfected forever them that are sanctified.*"

Now we see how incomparably superior Christ's sacrifice was to the carnal ordinances of the old Jewish dispensation, "which did not make the comers thereunto perfect," but were merely a shadow of better things to come, and only served "to the purifying of the flesh," that is in a moral point of view, but did not cleanse their consciences from dead works; but the Apostle Paul argues, in contrasting the type with the antitype, thus: If these carnal ordinances did sanctify the unclean "to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God!"

We learn from the foregoing treatise that there

were two requisites essential to effect an atonement between God and man, namely, satisfaction to the justice of God and propitiation for the mercy of God. How can this be accomplished? Who is sufficient for this? This is the great mystery which interests the Angels in heaven, and which they desire to look into. Man had fallen from his former state of innocence, and had offended a righteous God, and had become utterly incapable of living up to the requirements of the broken law. As the Apostle Paul expresses it in Rom. viii. 3, 4 (R. V.), "For what the law could not do, wherein it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and as an offering for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit." Also Rom. iii. 19, 20 (R. V.): "Now we know that what things soever the law saith it speaketh to them that are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped and all the world may be brought under the judgment of God, because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight; for through the law cometh the knowledge of sin."

Here we have the lamentable fact stated that all the world was under condemnation, and that man was utterly incompetent to retrieve himself, "because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight." Now it was necessary that God's justice should be satisfied and His law vindicated before reconciliation could be made; and as the law was broken by a man it was imperative that His law should be vindicated by a *man;* so God out of pity and compassion for man's helplessness sent His Son into the world in the likeness of a man as an offering for sin, and He fulfilled the requirements of the law for us, so that God might be just and the justifier of all through faith in Him, and who, trusting in the merits of Christ's righteousness, might be justified in His sight as completely as if we had fulfilled the law ourselves.

And now, dear reader, we have seen in this redemptive scheme which we have been considering the marvellous wisdom, condescension, and love which God has displayed, and the sacrifices He has made in order to redeem man from his ruined condition, and yet at the same time to maintain the integrity of His righteous law. For He has said, "Till

heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law till all be fulfilled."

What a glorious salvation this is that God has provided; and, best of all, it is full and free to all who will accept of it as a free gift. God has done all He could to save man, and those that shall be lost are without excuse. "For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, *How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?*"

GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY AND MAN'S FREE AGENCY.

PERHAPS there is no subject that has so much perplexed and estranged the minds of good people from the time of St. Augustine down to the present as the doctrine of God's sovereignty and man's free agency, and, we may add, has prevented so many from entering into the visible Kingdom of God.

For, with all the subtile arguments of learned theologians to the contrary, the bald fact remains that man, being a thinking creature, will naturally come to the inevitable conclusion that if God exercises His sovereignty over man's eternal, *spiritual* destiny, this destiny is sealed and fixed irrevocably, without man's agency in the matter, and should lead to indifference in spiritual things; therefore the oft-repeated remark we hear from the lips of the impenitent, "If I am to be saved I will be saved, and if I am to be lost I will be lost."

Never do we hear this remark that we do not regret

that John Calvin should have given just ground for it in his "Institutes," where he says (and we quote verbatim), "All men are not created for the same end, but some are foreordained to eternal life, others to eternal damnation." So, according as every man was created for one end or the other, we say he was elected, that is, predestinated to life, or reprobated, that is, predestinated to damnation.

"This is a hard saying; who can hear it" without a shudder of abhorrence? We think if it were possible for Calvin to rewrite his "Institutes" of the Christian religion he would omit this horrible utterance, and save the world from this stone of stumbling and rock of offence.

Unfortunately for him, he entirely ignored man's free will, thereby reducing him to a mere machine, and divesting him of all responsibility; for how can a man be held responsible for his acts except he have the will or power of *choice* of his actions? But since Calvin's day man has been advancing in liberal thought, and now it is conceded by almost all Christian sects that he is a free agent, and has something to do in working out his salvation, although it is still considered a great mystery, and a difficult

problem to solve and reconcile God's sovereignty with man's free agency. Where does God's sovereignty end, and man's free agency begin? Can the nexus be found? This question has never as yet been satisfactorily answered.

The writer, after many years of assiduous study and reading, has at length been enabled to formulate some thoughts which are at least satisfactory to his mind, and if he shall be able to adduce some reasons which will satisfy the minds of his readers he will be most happy.

That God is a sovereign no one will deny. He is the supreme ruler and governor of the universe. "He rules among the armies of Heaven and the inhabitants of Earth." "By Him kings rule and princes decree justice." "In Him we live and move and have our being." "All our times are in His hands." "He openeth His hand and supplieth the wants of every living creature." "He hideth His face and they die." We might go on and adduce numerous texts of Scripture to prove incontestably that God is a sovereign, and exercises His supreme control in the management of the moral and material universe; but it is our purpose to show that

God does not exercise His sovereignty over man's will in *spiritual things*, that He has constituted man a free agent, and consequently holds him responsible for his acts, for in the great day of final assize every one will be required to render an account to Him for the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or bad. In order to demonstrate this point more clearly to the general mind, so that it may be fully apprehended, we say, first, that God is a God of *order*, and has included Himself in that order, for we shall see as we progress in this argument that God, in creating the universe, has marvellously arranged everything in a *certain order*, and in this order every created thing is circumscribed and bound to move. We see this exemplified in the movements of the heavenly bodies; how unerringly each planet moves in its respective orbit around the sun, in the order in which the Creator first placed it, never deviating a line from its assigned sphere.

Passing by the wonderful order in the geological formation of the earth, we will notice the various orders of life on the earth. After God had created the heavens and the earth, then, as we learn in

Gen. i. and xi., He created life: "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his *kind* [order], whose seed is in itself upon the earth."

Next in order of life we learn in Gen. i. 20, that God created the moving creatures in the waters, then the winged fowls of the air after his *kind* [order]. Next in order, verses 24, 25, God created the beasts of the earth, and every creeping thing after his *kind* [order].

Then next in order He created MAN, and gave him dominion over all the lower animals, as we read in Gen. i. 26, 27: "And God said, Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness; and let him have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in His *own image*, in the image of God created He him, male and female created He them." Now we begin to see in this order of arrangement the marvellous wisdom of God in creating first the means of subsistence for each creature in regular order. Man being last in the order, had dominion over all created things on

the earth and was constituted the lord of creation; but what we are particularly to notice in this connection is that God created man in His *own image*,—that is, He endowed him with an immortal spirit, as we learn in Gen. ii. 7: "And man became a *living soul*." It was this likeness to God which gave him pre-eminence over the other creatures which God had made, and brought him up to conjunction and fellowship with God, fitted him for companionship and interchange of affection and love; made him "partaker of the Divine nature,"—that is, resemblance of nature, which presupposes that there is in his constitution something analogous with God, to enable him to be partaker of the Divine nature, something common to each individuality so coalescing; rendering him capable of enjoying the society of God in a state of perfect bliss; as St. Paul says, "Man is of the race of God."

This brings us to the main thought which we wish to emphasize, viz., that man being made in the image and nature of God *must* have *free will* and *choice*, for if he is lacking in this he cannot be of the nature of God, for this it is which places him in the series above the lower orders of God's creation, and

gives him the pre-eminence. Now we think we have the key which unlocks the mystery of God's sovereignty and man's free agency, and claim that we have found the *nexus*. We therefore say that God has delegated or surrendered so much of His sovereignty as would conflict or interfere with the exercise of man's free will,—mark you, in *spiritual things;* for we beg the reader to observe that all we contend for in regard to man's free agency is the exercise of his will in *spiritual things*. Therefore we see the reason why God holds man *responsible* for not only his acts but his thoughts also; for we repeat, if man had not free will it would be unreasonable to hold him responsible for his deeds; it would be just as reasonable to hold a horse or any of the lower order of animals responsible for their actions. Have we not here an argument to *silence* the cavils of the infidel which we so often hear, viz., Why did not God make man incapable of falling? We answer, for the simple reason if He had done so He could not fulfil the *order* of *man*. The very fact that man *did* fall is strong proof that man is a free agent, for if he were not he never could have fallen. Thus God in His word recognizes man as a free

agent, and treats with him as such: "Come let us *reason* together, saith the Lord."

Now there could be no meaning attached to the word *reason*, if man were not endowed with a *free will* to reason with. Just here we get another hint why God gave man a free will, viz., that his affectionate nature towards God his Father may be *voluntary*, hence *reciprocal*. It is this *free* interchange of love with His children, which God delights in. We have Christ's own words for this in John xiv. 21, 23: "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him." "If a man love me he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." Here we see *reciprocity* of love and community of feeling, which cannot be predicated of any one except there be free and *spontaneous* interchange of love. God in His essence is love, and love craves some object for its exercise; hence He created man with capacities suitable for the bestowment of His favor. So we repeat, He created man in His own image and likeness, partaker of the Divine nature, fitting him for the enjoyment of the society of God in a state of perfect bliss.

Many persons while conceding the free agency of man are yet troubled in their minds concerning the Divine prescience. They say, Does not God know all my actions, my every thought, and all my ways, and does not His foreknowledge extend to my final destiny? Therefore, He must know beforehand whether I will be saved or lost.

Well, of course, God's prescience does comprehend all things. Not a sparrow falleth to the ground without His notice, and the very hairs of our heads are all numbered by Him. But there is a wide difference between God's foreknowledge and foreordination. God knew beforehand that Adam and Eve would eat of the forbidden fruit, but who will have the hardihood to say that God constrained them to eat of that which He had forbidden?

Man's probationary life consists in the aggregation of single acts or deeds, for which he will be judged accordingly, whether they be good or bad; and God has established imperative laws which obtain all through the moral creation,—that is, "whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." So every act of our probationary life is so many seeds

of good or evil sown, which will inevitably reproduce its kind. A repetition of single acts forms habit, and habit persisted in makes character, and character seals our future destiny.

Now while we must admit that God knows our future destiny, which will be in accordance with the character which we build up in this life, whether it be for weal or woe, yet who will not admit in his inner consciousness that every one of these single acts which he has done in the body was done *voluntarily* on his part, and without any coercion on God's part?

God in giving us free agency has given us the choice of good and evil for the exercise of our free will, with the power to resist evil and choose good, and therefore He holds us accountable for our choice, and if He exercises any influence on us it is to persuade our wills in the right direction.

Again, that unfortunate English word "predestination" has been the occasion of much disturbance in the minds of men. It is a word that is susceptible of diverse meanings, and it depends altogether upon the particular sense in which we use the word in the interpretation of Scripture as to which of the

various doctrines held by the church we shall drift into.

The definition of the word predestination as given by the lexicographer is, foreordination; predetermination; fate; to appoint beforehand by an unchangeable purpose; intention; the act of decreeing or foreordaining events.

John Calvin and his adherents who believe in the doctrine of election and reprobation, have chosen to take the word predestination in the sense of *predetermination*, and so interpret all passages of Scripture which speak of the eternal purposes of God *unconditionally*, while Arminius and his adherents, who do not believe in the doctrine of unconditional election and reprobation, prefer to take it in the sense of *intention* subject to certain conditions, and so interpret all passages of Scripture which speak of the eternal purpose of God *conditionally*.

We will now quote some of the strongest passages of Scripture on which the hyper-Calvinists rely for support of their theory of God's unconditional election and reprobation, and if we succeed in showing the fallacy of their views in these strong passages we need fear no other.

In Romans, eighth chapter, 28th, 29th, and 30th verses, we read thus: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified." Also, Eph. i. 5, 11: "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself according to the good pleasure of His will." "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will."

Now if these passages of Scripture be taken as they read, disconnected from the context in which they are found, we must admit that they give strong support to the doctrine of election. But we contend that the Bible should be interpreted on *general principles* and not by *isolated* texts; for if that principle be adopted we could prove almost anything by

the Bible, no matter how absurd the theory may be. But let us consider these passages in connection with the context. In the first place we would remark, that if we read the preceding chapter in which this passage which we have quoted from Romans is taken, we shall see that these Roman converts to Christianity were suffering great persecution and afflictions of various kinds by reason of their profession of faith in Christ. St. Paul reminds them that they are no longer in bondage to the law of works of the flesh, but they, having been delivered from the bondage of sin and death, are made freemen in Christ Jesus; and having died to sin, and been buried with Christ and baptized into His death, were raised again to newness of life; and having been adopted children of God, "and if children then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified with Him." Then he goes on by way of comforting them, and makes it a matter of calculation, for he says, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to usward." This is the scope of the apostle's argument by way of ad-

ministering spiritual consolation to them in their afflictions and persecutions, and he then breaks out in the exulting language of the text that we are considering. And we know that all these afflictions which they were suffering will work together for good to them that love God, who are called according to His purpose,—*i.e.*, it is according to the purpose of God to make His children perfect through suffering, and all such are called (*i.e.*, it is their vocation) to endure hardship as good soldiers of the cross, and thereby they are made conformable to Christ: "if so be that they suffer with Him, they also shall reign with Him."

Then he goes on to give a reason for these sufferings and tribulations which they were called to endure, and says, "For whom He did foreknow He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren." We will try to elucidate this passage step by step as briefly as possible, for to enter into an elaborate discussion of this subject would greatly exceed the limits we have marked out for it.

Now we would premise (in the first place) that St. Paul wrote these words to *Christians* who had

been *already converted*, and not to unbelievers; for, as we have already remarked, he wrote these words to administer spiritual consolation to them in their severe persecutions, for he tells them in the 28th verse that all these things (trials and persecutions) work together for good to them that *love God.* This point conceded, it will help us better to understand the following words.

First, then, "For whom He did foreknow He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren."

Now the Scriptures in many places speak of God as knowing His adopted children, and they know Him. "The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous." "The Lord knoweth them that are His." Christ says, John x. 14 (R. V.): "I am the good shepherd, and I know mine own, and mine own know me, even as the Father knoweth me, and I know the Father." But some will say that for God to *know* and *fore*know is quite different. Not at all. The sempiternity of God comprehends all the past and the future as well as the present; in fact, to the Divine mind there is no past or future but the ever-

present Now, as we have tried to show in our article on "Eternity," to which the reader is referred. Now we see the intimate relation that God sustains to His people, and we are further told that He did predestinate His adopted children "to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren." As we have elected to use the word predestination in the sense of purpose or intention, we see that it is God's eternal purpose in bringing upon His people trials and tribulations in order to make them conformable to the image of His son. Secondly, "Moreover, whom He did predestinate them He also called [*i.e.*, vocation], and whom He called them He also justified [*i.e.*, acquitted or approved], and whom He justified them He also glorified."

Now, having, as we think, demonstrated that the whole scope of the apostle's argument in the preceding chapter, from which this controverted passage is taken, was to administer spiritual comfort to these Roman converts to Christianity in their afflictions for the cause of Christ, and to show them that all these tribulations were intended for their spiritual good, the remaining portion of this passage will

be easy to understand, and may be paraphrased thus: Moreover, brethren, as it is God's way of dealing with His adopted children in order to purify them by passing through the furnace of affliction, He has so ordained or appointed to them that are called or who have made it their vocation to lead a pure Christian life, and that they may be justified or approved of God, and thereby made partakers of the Divine nature, and thus "glorify God in their bodies and their spirits, which are His." "For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." And as the catechism has it, "Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever."

The other passage we have quoted from Ephesians will need very little comment after what we have already said in the foregoing, and we need only quote the same passages from the Revised Version, and we think the meaning will be apparent and in harmony with our paraphrase on the eighth chapter of Romans. Eph. i. 5–11 (R. V.): "Having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace,

which He freely bestowed on us in the beloved, in whom we have our redemption through His blood; in Him, I say, in whom also we were made a heritage, having been foreordained according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His will."

Now we think it must be obvious to every dispassionate mind that there is nothing in these passages to warrant the belief that God has predestinated any of His moral creatures to *unconditional* election to grace or reprobation; for God has positively said "He would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth as is in Jesus." Again, lest any should doubt God's intentions concerning His creatures, as regards their eternal destiny, He has made an oath, and as He could swear by none greater than Himself, He says (Ezek. xxxiii. 11): "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" It is strange that after God has spoken so positively and confirmed it with an oath that any should still doubt that He has any intentions concerning His

creatures but the best for their eternal destiny. God has given each one of us the choice of our destiny, and it will be just what we choose to make it. "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve." Now if we have shown in the foregoing argument that God has given to man freedom of choice in spiritual things, what becomes of Calvin's doctrine of election and reprobation, which has disturbed the minds of men for centuries, and has caused so much asperity of feeling among all sects of Christians, and, we may add, dishonor to the cause of Christianity?

The writer has no wish to engage in a controversy with any who will not accept the views set forth in this article, the world has had enough of that; but he invites criticism and disproof, if there be any who can demonstrate that the points presented in the foregoing are erroneous. It is the *truth* we are in search of on this vexed subject. And now, dear, impenitent reader, we beg you to earnestly ponder over this subject. If what we have tried to show be correct, there is a more fearful responsibility resting upon you than if the doctrine of election and reprobation were true, for the matter of your soul's eternal interest depends on *your choice*. God says

to you, "*Choose* ye this day whom ye will serve;" again, "Whosoever *will*, let him come and take of the water of life *freely*."

We know some will say that God worketh in the heart of the sinner, "both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Very well; God's Spirit does move or operate upon the heart of every impenitent sinner, persuading his will, and it is His good pleasure that all may be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth as is in Jesus, but He never does convert the sinner *against* his *will*. He must yield a willing obedience to God's commands.

So it all amounts to simply this: whosoever *will* may be saved, and whosoever *will not* may be lost.

RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.

PERHAPS there is no doctrine of the Bible that is so little understood as the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead; at least, none that men hold so many conflicting and vague opinions upon. All Christians believe in the resurrection of the dead; but if we ask one to define his idea of it he will soon be confounded in the thought and confess his ignorance. If we go back to the time of Galileo, we find that the prevalent notion entertained was that the earth was flat, and that it was the centre of the universe, and that the resurrection and final judgment would take place in the Valley of *Jehoshaphat*, where all the quick and the dead were to be summoned to judgment to receive their final doom of reward or punishment; but after it was demonstrated that the earth was round, and men's ideas began to expand, they abandoned that fallacious notion and took broader views of things. But

men's minds grow in wisdom gradually, little by little, and it is not to be expected that we would, by one bound, jump from such gross ignorance to perfect wisdom.

As the creeds were made in the days of darkness and superstition, we are not to expect them free from errors, especially in the discernment of spiritual things. The so-called Apostle's Creed is a marvellous compendium of the Christian system of belief, and, considering the time it was formulated, it is wondrously free from errors, and it has received the assent of all Christian sects. Perhaps the only clause that might be complained of is that "I believe in the resurrection of the *body*," and even this is not objectionable were it not generally understood to mean the *natural* or *corporeal* body that is to be reanimated. Nowhere in the Scriptures is it definitely stated that the *natural* or material body shall rise again, but the *spiritual* body will. So the creed is all right as it is, by simply inferring that the spiritual body is to be raised instead of the natural body, as it is most generally understood to mean.

St. Paul, in 1 Cor. xv., exhaustively treats of this subject of the resurrection of the dead, and in his

epistle to the Corinthians (whose minds were also confused on this subject) he says, "But some man will say, How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come? Thou foolish one, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that *body* that *shall be*, but a bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or some other grain."

Here we have a plain statement that the body we bury in the ground is *not* the same *body* that *shall be* raised, for we read in verse 44, "It is sown a *natural* body, and is raised a *spiritual body*." Here we have a plain, positive statement (which will not admit of any other interpretation) that the natural or material body will not be raised, but the *spiritual* will be; and when we get a positive declaration, we must accept it as the truth; and all other passages of Scripture that seemingly may be construed to mean anything else must be interpreted in harmony with what we know to be the truth.

Furthermore, we read in Job vii. 9, 10, "As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away, so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more. He shall return no more to his house, neither shall

his place know him any more." Job xvi. 22, "When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return." Job. xiv. 12, "So man lieth down, and riseth not; till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep."

Now we think these passages are sufficient to demonstrate conclusively that the natural or material body will not be raised from the dead. Now comes the question, "How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?" We answer in St. Paul's words, "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a *spiritual* body. There is a natural body and there is a *spiritual* body." Mark you, there *is* a natural body, and there *is* a spiritual body. Verses 48, 49, 50, "As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the *image* of the earthy, we also shall bear the *image* of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."

Now we think, in the light of the Scripture that we have quoted, we are prepared to say that the

natural body rises not again, but the spiritual body does rise from the dead, and assumes the exact form and likeness of the natural body (verse 49), and as we have borne the *image* of the earthy, we also shall bear the *image* of the heavenly. This is plain, that our spiritual body is the very image of our natural body, and will be recognized as such in the other life; this has been demonstrated by the appearance of Moses and Elias on the Mount of Transfiguration, Dives and Lazarus, and other instances that might be mentioned. It is a great mistake (as some think) that the soul after it leaves the body is in some undefinable state, half existence, or unconscious existence, for an indefinite time, or until the resurrection, when it is by some supposed it will join the dead body and come to judgment. We have no Scripture for such a notion, but the Scriptures always regard the departed spirit as in a perfect state of existence, and in no way dependent on the body for existence or for the enjoyment of the spiritual life. Christ said to the dying thief on the cross, "This day shalt *thou* be with me in paradise." He did not say this day part or half of thee shall be with me, but *thou* thyself, all that constitutes thee a

man. It is not the most comforting view to take of the spiritual life to suppose that our dear departed ones should be in a nondescript mode of existence or in a comatose state for thousands of years, awaiting the final resurrection day to join the dead, decomposed body, that it may enjoy the immortal life together; and yet many good people have this notion. The soul is no way dependent upon the body for existence, and after death at once enters upon the immortal life with all its faculties unimpaired. St. Paul says, "For me to live is Christ, but to depart and be with Christ is far better." Again he says, "It is sown in weakness, it is raised in *power*." So if it is raised in *power*, the soul is improved in all its essential elements of influence by being separated from the body, which is a clog and an hindrance to its full action and development in this life. St. Paul felt this when he breaks out in the exclamation, "O, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death of sin?" Who does not know in his experience that there is a constant conflict going on within him? as St. Paul expresses it, "The spirit lusteth against the flesh and the flesh against the spirit, so that the one is contrary

to the other;" "that when we would do good evil is present with us;" but when the spirit is freed from the impediment of the body, it takes its flight untrammelled, and enters at once into the full fruition of its heaven-born aspirations, and, as we have reason to believe, the departed spirits of just men made perfect become angels; and we read in Ps. ciii, 20, that "the angels *excel* in *strength*." Is not this being raised in *power?*

We come now to notice some passages of Scripture which, if read literally, seem to imply the resurrection of the dead body; but as we have shown from other passages of Scripture which are definite and positive, and cannot be construed to mean anything else than what they clearly affirm (unless a thing can be said to be and not to be at the same time), we must find some interpretation that would be in harmony with what we have in the foregoing arguments demonstrated. St. Paul says, "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." And Christ says (John vi. 63), "The words I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Just here we would remark that all the errors in the creeds of the church have their origin in interpreting literally passages of

Scripture which are symbolical and have a spiritual signification; almost all Christ's teachings were symbolical; they are spirit and they are life.

As we have quoted passages from the Book of Job to prove that the dead body rises *not* again, we will now quote some passages which have been used in support of the theory that the natural body is to be raised. First we quote Job xix. 26, 27: "And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me." The reader by referring to this passage will notice the words "though," "worms," and "body" are in Italics, which are interpolations, and not in the original manuscript. By omitting the Italicized words the text will read quite differently. Job was sorely afflicted with a loathsome disease, which destroyed the soundness of his skin, so that he abhorred himself, but saw in a prophetic vision the time when he would see God in soundness of flesh, which was literally fulfilled. After his restoration and vindication we read, Job xlii. 5, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eyes seeth

Thee." Again (Isa. xxvi. 19): "Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Dan. xii. 2: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

Now who does not know that these passages are symbolisms, portraying Israel's downfall and captivity, as is instanced in the prophet's appeal (Isa. lii. 2): "Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion." And it is further explained by the prophet Ezekiel in the vision of the resurrection of the dry bones in the valley (Ezek. xxxvii. 11–13): "Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord when I have opened your

graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord." Thus we see that all these passages are symbolical of Israel's captivity and national restoration, and have no relevancy to the literal resurrection.

We will now notice some passages in the New Testament which have been often quoted to prove the resurrection of the dead body, viz., John v. 28, 29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." These words of our Saviour are almost identical with the words we have quoted from Dan. xii. 2, and when read in connection with the context the spiritual significance will be apparent. For Christ says (John vi. 63), "The words I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." And we have the true key to the spiritual import of these words in verses 24, 25: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth

my word and believeth on Him that sent me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live."

Now it is plain that Christ is here speaking of a spiritual resurrection to those that are spiritually dead in trespasses and sin, for He says he that heareth my word and believeth on Him that sent me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life. The Scriptures abound with metaphors representing the unregenerate as dead in sin, but after being regenerated or converted he passes from death unto life. That is, he riseth from the dead condition out of the grave of corruption or spiritual uncleanness to newness of life, and is made clean every whit "by the cleansing blood of Christ, or by the washing of regeneration" he becomes a new creature, and is alive in Christ.

We ask, is this not the meaning of Christ's own words used in denouncing the hypocrisy of the Pharisees (Matt. xxiii. 27): "Wo unto you, Scribes

and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness?" Luke xi. 44: "Wo unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them."

It is evident this is the true meaning to be attached to Christ's words in the passage we have quoted, for the reader will notice that in verse 25 He says, "The hour is coming, and *now is*, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." If He had reference to some remote resurrection He would not have said the hour *now is.*

There are many other passages which speak of the resurrection of the dead, but, if read in connection with the context, it will be apparent they have reference to a spiritual resurrection only; for instance, Eph. v. 14, where St. Paul, in exhorting the Ephesians to a better life, saith, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Phil. iii. 10, 11: "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and

the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."

Now it is manifest that the apostle is here speaking of that spiritual resurrection which every believer attains through fellowship with Christ, being made conformable unto His death. "Christ is the resurrection and the life" of every believer, and the exhortation is, "If we be risen with Christ, we should seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God."

Thus we might go on and adduce many more passages of like import, but we think this will suffice to demonstrate the propositions we have made, viz.: First, There will be no resurrection of the natural body. Second, There will be a resurrection of the spiritual body. Third, The resurrection of the spiritual body occurs at the last day of the natural life, or what is commonly called death. Fourth, The departed spirit enters at once upon the spiritual life, according to the order or character formed in this life. "Every man in his own order," as St. Paul expresses it. That is, according to the affinities of his nature, whether they be good or bad.

According to the latest scientific thought, the human soul, as it leaves the body, has an "ethereal non-atomic enswathement," which is the spiritual body spoken of in the Scriptures, and which is the body that is raised at death.

If asked what is the substance of this non-atomic ethereal enswathement which constitutes the spiritual body, we answer we do not know, for the reason that the natural eye cannot see it, for the natural eye is only adjusted to see material substances; but we are not to suppose that there is nothing beyond that which we can see with our natural eyes. We cannot see electricity (except when it manifests itself in the flash of its interrupted current), but it is only necessary for one to take hold of the poles of an electric battery to be convinced that there is something that the eye does not see.

If we had our spiritual eyes open, like Gehazi, the servant of the Prophet Elisha, we could then see these spiritual bodies (2 Kings vi. 17): "And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray Thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw; and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire

round about Elisha." And may we not suppose that the substance of the spiritual body is something that is analogous to electricity, especially when we consider the qualities which are ascribed to it in the Scriptures, viz., as possessing strength and power, vividness, incorruptibility, and immortality?

All these qualities inhere in electricity, and why should not the spiritual body be similarly constituted? We have shown in the foregoing argument that the spiritual body, as it leaves the natural body, takes on a form similar to the corporeal body, and the soul, which is the understanding and the will and consciousness, must have a body suitable to the spiritual existence, by which it acts. Paul says (1 Cor. xv. 38), "God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." Just as every seed when it germinates and rises from the ground with a new body which God gives it so every soul when it rises from the dead, God giveth it a new body suitable for its spiritual life. Again (2 Cor. v. 1–3, R. V.), "For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For verily in this we

groan, longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For indeed we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but that we would be clothed upon, that what is immortal may be swallowed up of life."

What a glorious description this is of the spiritual body with which God clothes the naked soul! and we ask the reader to notice particularly that the naked soul has not to wait for thousands of years in an unconscious sleep (as some suppose) before being clothed with a body, but as soon as the earthly house is dissolved we *have*—not *shall* have, but *have* —a building *from God* (mark you), a house not made with hands, but eternal in the heavens! For, as the Apostle expresses it, "for indeed we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but that we would be clothed upon." Now comes the grand and sublime thought "that what is *immortal* may be swallowed up of life." So we see that all that is immortal in us is taken with us, and is swallowed up in life everlasting. Being clothed upon with the spiritual body,

which is as well adapted for the spiritual world as the natural body is adapted to the natural world, with capacities immeasurably increased, and not subject to the ills which the natural body is in this life, and in which we do groan, being burdened with so many infirmities; but then "God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away" (Rev. xxi. 4). Dear reader, if we could sufficiently apprehend the joys and the glorious inheritance that awaits the Christian in the spiritual life, we would not think of death with that dread as we are wont to think of it, but we should feel like St. Paul did when he took a calm view of it, and gave utterance to a strong desire to depart this life and be with Christ, which is far better than anything in this life can afford; and Paul also says, "For me to live is Christ, but to die is gain." And so it is a great gain to exchange this burdensome body for one not burdensome. The grave gets only that part which is effete and of no more use to us, and gets no victory, for the real man, the immortal soul, has risen from the dead, and is clothed upon

with a heavenly body. And now we are prepared to join in the Apostle's exulting and triumphant exclamation, "O grave! where is thy victory? O death! where is thy sting?"

The poet Pope was inspired with the true idea of death when he wrote the following words, which we quote, and with which we close this dissertation:

"The world recedes: it disappears!
Heaven opens on my eyes! my ears
With sounds seraphic ring.
Lend, lend your wings! I mount! I fly!
O grave! where is thy victory?
O death! where is thy sting?"

CHRIST'S RESURRECTED BODY.

It is now conceded to be an undeniable fact that Christ did rise from the tomb on the third day after His crucifixion, according to the Scriptures, without His body suffering the dishonor of corruption, as was predicted. Ps. xvi. 10: "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell [*i.e.*, grave]; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." And Jesus Himself said (John ii. 19), "And Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple [*i.e.*, body], and in three days I will raise it up."

Various attempts have been made to disprove the historical fact that Christ did rise from the dead on the third day after His crucifixion, but there is sufficient corroborative contemporaneous history to establish the fact incontestably that such was the truth, and we do not deem it necessary to adduce any further testimony to prove what is now almost universally admitted.

The reason why the enemies of Christianity have been so much concerned to refute the historical account of Christ's resurrection is that it is the pivotal point upon which Christianity hinges. St. Paul felt this, and in his preaching he earnestly and persistently insisted upon this one point in establishing the foundations of the Christian religion. He says (1 Cor. xv. 17), "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." So if the infidel could only prove that Christ did not rise from the dead the third day, "according to the Scriptures," and that all the corroborative history is a myth, he would undermine the foundations of the Christian religion and the world be without a Saviour.

There have been various opinions held concerning the nature of Christ's risen body during the time between His resurrection and ascension. Some have thought it was a physical body, but the greater part have held it was a spiritual body.

Now we propose to show that while both of these opinions are true in part, yet neither are true in the abstract. For we think it can be proved from Scripture that our Lord had both a natural and spiritual

body at times between His resurrection and ascension.

In the first place, we will quote a passage of Scripture which proves conclusively that at the time He appeared to His disciples in the room, after His resurrection, He must have had a natural body. Luke xxiv. 37, 39: "But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have."

Now this is plain language, and will not admit of any controversy as regards the kind of a body which Christ had when these words were spoken, and every candid mind must admit that at this time He had a corporeal body, or else there can be no meaning in these plain words.

Now let us look at the other side of this question, and we will see that on another occasion He had a spiritual body. Thomas not being present on the first occasion of His appearance to His disciples, when they had told him that they had seen the Lord

would not believe, and said, "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe." John xx. 26. "Then after eight days again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them; then came Jesus, the door being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you."

Here it is evident He came into the room in a spiritual body, for the reader will notice that He came into the room the door being *shut.* This is significant, for how could He get into the room without opening the door if He had a natural body? But after He was in the room He materialized His body, and said, "Peace be unto you," and after eating with them, and convincing unbelieving Thomas, He vanished out of their sight.

We read of ten different instances during the forty days intervening between His resurrection and ascension of His appearing and disappearing to His disciples, and He must have changed His natural body into a spiritual body, and *vice versa.*

This power of mind over matter has long been recognized even in the human being; many in-

stances have been given in psychological treatises. Why, then, should it be thought incredible that our Lord, the maker of heaven and earth, should not have the power to change His natural body into a spiritual one, and *vice versa?* We read of two instances before His crucifixion (Luke iv. 29, 30; John viii. 59) in which He must have converted His natural body into a spiritual one, or how could He have hid Himself or passed through a throng of people unseen, especially when they were intent on killing Him?

Again, Elijah, when translated in a chariot of fire, must have been changed from a material body into a spiritual body; also Enoch; for we are told that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven."

We might mention several instances where angels have been materialized; for instance, the three angels that came into the tent of Abraham and dined with him. Phantoms do not eat. Also the angels that pulled Lot out of Sodom by force; but most noticeable of all the angelic appearances was the angel who wrestled with Jacob all night and dislocated his hip-joint. Could a phantom do this?

Why, then, should there be any doubt that Christ

had power over His own body at will to change the material into the spiritual or the spiritual into the material? His changing of water into wine, or feeding five thousand persons "with five loaves of bread and two small fishes" are as extraordinary miracles as this. All Christians believe the Scripture account of our Lord's conception, which was a clear and remarkable instance of spirit-power over matter, as St. John tells us (John i. 14): "The Word [spirit] was made flesh [matter], and dwelt among us." In fact, the whole material universe is a standing argument in favor of this spirit-power over matter, for God, who is spirit, "created the heavens and the earth" by an impulse of His will or mind.

If we could only realize the fact that matter is subject to mind, and not mind to matter, the foregoing thoughts would appear more plausible. We are accustomed to say that the hand of man constructs our houses and ships and engines, while the truth is that the hand is only the instrument by which the *mind* does it,—the hand of a Raphael is no more competent than the hand of a chimpanzee to paint those master-pieces of art without the mind of a Raphael.

We see this thought exemplified in nature; it is the *unseen* forces of nature that are the most powerful. Heat and cold are more powerful forces than the lever or the screw of Archimedes; so, in a much greater degree, is this unseen power of the spiritual world over the world of matter. We read that "the angels excel in strength," and that God (who is spirit) is almighty, and, in fact, all power is unseen; for St. Paul says, "The things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal."

JUDGMENT.

In our dissertation on the resurrection of the dead the reader no doubt was disappointed in not finding anything concerning the judgment. We purposely avoided touching that theme at that time, in order to treat of it under a special head, which we now take up.

The popular belief as regards the judgment-day is that after the resurrection of the dead body the quick and the dead from Adam down will be gathered together in one grand convocation, and Christ will come in the clouds of heaven, with the angels with Him, and at the sounding of the trumpet all people, of every kindred and tongue, will be summoned to judgment; and after the final judgment the earth will be burned up, and the heavens rolled up like a scroll, and the elements melt with fervent heat. All this to take place in the physical world.

We will now examine this subject in the light of Scripture, and see if this received notion is the correct one or not.

As we remarked in treating of the resurrection, if we read the Scriptures literally we will get into inextricable confusion, and can prove almost anything from Scripture, no matter how absurd it may be. God is the author of all truth, and there is a threefold method of testing truth, viz., by Scripture, reason, and science. If by applying this method we find Scripture, reason, and science harmonize, we may be assured it is the truth, and any proposition that will not stand this test we may be sure is not truth, for God is the author of all, and they must agree.

We will now inquire, first, when does the judgment take place; second, where does the judgment take place; third, how?

In answering the first question, viz., *When* does the judgment take place? we must go to the Scriptures for our answer. We read in Heb. ix. 27 (R. V.): "And inasmuch as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh the judgment." We have here a plain, positive statement that after the death of the body then comes the judgment. Nothing is said about the departed spirit's going into some undefinable state or place for an indefinite time, to await the final resurrection of the dead and

judgment-day at the end of the world, at the final consummation of all things, when the elements are to melt with fervent heat, which may be millions of years in the remote future. No; the Scriptures say, after a man dies then comes judgment; death is a finality to all that pertains to this life, and the immortal spirit, after leaving the dead body, is judged at once, and enters upon its final state, either of bliss or misery, according to the character formed in this life. "He goes to his own place," as is instanced in the different conditions of Dives and Lazarus. Thus we aver that the judgment takes place immediately after the spirit departs from the body. Were it not so, how could Dives and Lazarus, and Judas too, have gone to their own place? Is it reasonable to suppose that a righteous God would consign a moral accountable being to perdition or to heaven without judgment being first had? Impossible: it would be a libel on God's goodness and wisdom to suppose such a thing.

Having answered our first inquiry, viz., *When* does the judgment take place? we will now notice our second inquiry, viz., *Where* does judgment take place?

In regard to this question, if we have shown that judgment takes place immediately after the death of the body, the corollary is it must take place in the spiritual world, and all the accounts we have in the Scriptures of the judgment imply that it is in the spiritual world. Daniel, when his spiritual eyes were opened and he was permitted to see into the spiritual world, says (chapter vii. verses 9, 10), "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The judgment was set, and the books were opened." Also John the Revelator (his spiritual eyes being open, was permitted to look into the spiritual world), says (Rev. xx. 11, 12), "And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened,

which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."

Here we have a declaration of two, who, having their spiritual eyes opened, were permitted to look into the spiritual world, and they both agree in saying that they *saw* a great multitude standing before the throne of God, actually undergoing judgment. We know some will say these visions of the judgment have reference to the final day of judgment, at the dissolution of the earth; but the reader will notice that Daniel and John both say they "*saw*" or "*beheld*," which implies the present. And when we consider the fact that there are something like one hundred thousand souls departing from this life every twenty-four hours, we are not surprised at the numbers that are constantly being judged.

The idea which some have broached, viz., that the soul after death goes into a sleep, or is imprisoned in Hades—that is, the centre of the earth—in a comatose state, awaiting the final judgment, is unphilosophical, and to our mind absurd; for spirit is not subject to matter, and cannot be imprisoned in matter; neither do spirits sleep. "God is not the

God of the dead, but of the living." "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out" (John xii. 31). Some think they can see a sufficient reason for a deferred resurrection of the body and final judgment from the fact that all the bad or good deeds were committed while the soul was in the body, and therefore as a consequence the body should have a share in the misery or happiness resultant therefrom.

To the inconsiderate this may seem plausible, but a little consideration will show the futility of such a notion; for the body never performed an act without being instigated by the soul. We do not think of holding a horse responsible for his deeds, for the reason that he is not an accountable, conscious being. The body of a man is merely the instrument by which the soul acts while in the body, and is no more accountable than Guiteau's pistol, by which he shot our lamented President. Besides, scientists tell us that the natural or corporeal body changes entirely every seven to ten years; so if a man dies at the age of seventy he has had seven to ten different bodies. Therefore sins that were committed at the ages of ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty,

or sixty years were committed in a different body from that he had when he died. Which of these seven bodies will be raised or judged? The absurdity must be apparent to every thoughtful mind.

But some will object and say, Do not the Scriptures speak of a final dissolution of the heavens and the earth when the Son of Man shall come in the clouds of heaven, with the angels with Him, at the last day to judge the world? Yes; and we will now notice some of these passages and see if they are susceptible of a literal or spiritual interpretation. First we will quote from Isa. xxxiv. 4: "And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig-tree." Also we quote a similar passage from Matt. xxiv. 29–31: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth

mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

Let us now see if these passages will stand the test of a literal interpretation by applying the threefold test we have indicated, viz., is it in accord with reason, science, and Scripture? If we read these passages literally, all the stars of heaven are to fall from heaven to the earth. The science of astronomy teaches us that the sun is the centre of a system of worlds to which our earth belongs, and the fixed stars are innumerable suns, forming centres of systems of other worlds beyond our conception or computation; and when we consider that in our system alone there are planets nine or ten hundred times larger than our earth, we begin to see the absurdity of the notion that *all*, or even the stars belonging to our solar system, may fall down to the earth. The planet Jupiter alone would cover nine hundred worlds the size of our earth; so it is difficult to see how *all* the stars of heaven could fall down to our

earth. It is unreasonable and unscientific, and will not stand our test, therefore we must seek some other interpretation for the passages we have quoted. God does not require us to believe an absurdity; there are many mysteries *above* our reason but not *contrary* to reason.

How, then, shall we interpret these passages of Scripture in harmony with the views we have set forth in the foregoing argument? We read in verses 3, 4, in this same chapter from which we have quoted that after Christ had foretold to His disciples the destruction of the Temple, and the tribulations that were to come, His "disciples came unto Him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" And Jesus answered, and said unto them, "Take heed that no man deceive you." Then, after enumerating the various tribulations that were to transpire, He tells them, in verse 36, "But of the day and the hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." And enjoins them in verse 42, "Watch, therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come;" and verse 44, "Therefore be ye also

ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh."

Now it is evident that Jesus meant to impress upon His disciples the all-important thing, viz., to be ready when the Son of Man cometh, which is evidently the hour of death. Furthermore, He tells them in verse 34, "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled." So it is plain that He referred to the destruction of Jerusalem, or the end of the Jewish dispensation, which was undoubtedly meant by the phrase "the end of the world," or "the end of the age" (as it is translated in the R. V.); and so all through the New Testament, where the phrase occurs, "the end of the world" means the end of the age, or *æon*, and not the end of the physical world, as some suppose.

Again, He tells them "the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light." What sun? surely not the physical sun, but the sun of righteousness. God is represented throughout the Bible metaphorically as a sun. Ps. lxxxiv. 11: "For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory;" also we read in the Prophet

Isaiah, sixtieth chapter, that after Israel should emerge from the gross darkness occasioned by their apostasy from the true light of the "sun of righteousness," the prophet exclaims, in verses 1, 2, 3, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall rise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Then, verse 20, "Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended."

These graphic words of the prophet are so plain they need no comment; as the natural sun is darkened by the intervention of the clouds, so the light of God, our spiritual sun, is darkened by sin, which separates us from God. When by our sins we obscure the light which comes from God, then our foolish hearts become darkened, and we mourn the hidings of His face; but when we repent of our sins, and sincerely turn to God with full purpose of heart to love Him and obey His commandments, then

the "sun of righteousness will arise with healing in his wings," and fill our hearts with the sunshine of His "grace and glory." What a lamentable exemplification of this obscurity of the sun of righteousness came over the minds and hearts of men in the Middle or Dark Ages, when their foolish hearts were so darkened that they thought they were doing God's service by persecuting and actually killing one another because they differed in their religious opinions; and men become intolerant always when their foolish hearts are darkened by ignorance and sin, which obscures the light which shines from the sun of righteousness. As John (i. 5) expresses it: "And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehendeth it not."

Again, "The moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken." As the moon receives her light from the sun, so the true believer receives light from the sun of the soul, "which shines more and more unto the perfect day;" and as the stars reflect in the darkness of the night points of light, so God's word, if studied in the light of the spirit of truth, which "lighteneth every man that

cometh into the world," will shed light into the spiritually minded; so that every word of God will be a bright and shining star to those who have spiritual receptivities for comprehending it, for it is only those that are spiritually minded who can discern spiritual things. But when the minds of men become darkened with sensuous thoughts and selfish ends, then it is night to the soul: "the moon shall not give her light, and the stars fall from heaven."

This is evidently the modal of interpretation to be given to this passage of Scripture, which will be made more apparent from Christ's own words (Matt. xxiv. 15): "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth let him understand)." Now if we turn to Daniel, chapter ix., we will see that Daniel had prophesied these abominations and desolation that were to come upon the house of Israel, of which Christ had been telling His disciples; and when He tells them in verse 34, "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled," we must come to the conclusion that this passage of Scripture

had reference to the end of the Jewish church. If the reader will refer to several correlative passages in the Old Testament, viz., Isa. xiii. 10; Ezek. xxxii. 7; Joel ii. 10, 31, and iii. 15; Amos v. 20, viii. 9, he will see that they all pointed to the end of the Jewish dispensation and the setting up of Christ's spiritual kingdom.

But, again, how shall we interpret the words, "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other"?

As we think we have demonstrated that the other portions of this passage are not susceptible of a literal interpretation but a spiritual, so we must give this portion also a spiritual meaning; and as we think the Bible is its own interpreter, we will quote some passages that have a bearing on this subject. If we turn to the seventh chapter of Daniel, we read that Daniel had a vision of four beasts, which were

symbolisms of four different forms of antichrist or opposing powers to Christ's spiritual kingdom; and after describing the overthrow of these various forms of opposition, he uses, in verses 13, 14, almost the same expression, viz., "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Then we read in the following verses that Daniel was troubled to know the meaning of this vision; then we read in verses 16, 17, 18, "I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things. These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even for ever and ever." Here it is plain that this vision which Daniel saw was a symbolism of Christ's final triumph over

the powers of darkness, and His spiritual kingdom shall be everlasting. And the saints of the Most High shall reign with Him for ever and ever. When all this shall come to pass then shall appear the sign or banner of triumph in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth who have opposed His reign mourn because of the clouds of ignorance and superstition under which they have been resisting Messiah's reign; and the gospel trumpet of Christ shall gather together His chosen people from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other; and the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

That this is the construction which should be given to this passage of Scripture is made more clear by Christ's own words in answer to the question propounded by the Pharisees as to the time when the kingdom of God cometh. Luke xvii. 20, 21: "And being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God cometh, He answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, there! for, lo! the kingdom of God is within you."

Here we have a plain intimation that the passage, "And they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory," etc., is not to be read literally; for if read literally it would be with great show or observation, whereas He tells them "The kingdom of God cometh *not* with *observation*," or outward show; and, further, He tells them, "Neither shall they say, Lo, here! or, there! for, lo! the kingdom of God is within you;" that is, you need not expect me to come in a visible bodily form, with outward show; so that you should say, Lo! here is Christ, or, lo, there! for my kingdom is a spiritual kingdom, and is already *within you.*

Here is a grand truth which few Christians seem to comprehend or realize, "The kingdom of God is within you." We are so prone to think of heaven as a distant place; located, as some think, in the centre of the material universe; and as the star Alcyone is supposed by astronomers to be the centre of the universe, some theologians have conjectured that heaven is located there. This notion has originated no doubt from the fact that they have not considered Christ's saying, "The kingdom of

God is within you." If we could only realize more fully that Christ's kingdom is a *spiritual* kingdom, and needs no material location for heaven, we would see the absurdity of such a notion. The spiritual world is not far off, but is only separated by the veil of the fleshly body; and just so soon as the spirit is separated from the body it enters at once into the spiritual world; and if the kingdom of heaven has had a beginning while the spirit was in the body, it must continue to be in heaven when out of the body.

We now come to consider our third inquiry, viz., How does judgment take place? In order to answer this question we must again have recourse to the Scriptures, for we ask the reader to witness that in the treatment of this subject we have not advanced a thought without being supported by divine revelation; so those who may object to the views set forth in this dissertation must make their complaints to the Bible. For if we know our own heart, we have had no other end in view but to learn the truth and follow the leadings of the spirit of all truth; and this can only be done by divesting the mind of all preconceived notions and doctrines formed by men and

by humble submission to the teachings of the Spirit of God.

But, if the reader will pardon this digression, we will pursue our subject, *How*, then, does judgment take place?

If we turn to 2 Cor. v. 10 (A. V.), we read these words: "For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

Now we see that we must all appear (as it is rendered in the A. V.) before the judgment-seat of Christ; and all the deeds done while in the body are to be made manifest to the omniscient eye of the judge; whether it be good or bad, and just according to the deeds done *while in the body*, we shall receive our reward or punishment. But just here we would ask those who hold that the body will be raised and come to judgment, Why judged according to the deeds done *while in the body* if the body is already *present?* is there not an incongruity here?

Again we read in Rev. xx. 12 (R. V.), "And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne; and the books were opened; and another

book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books according to their works."

Here again we see that we are to be judged according to our works, and these works are written in the books. "And the books were opened, and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books." What books? Surely we are not to read this literally, too, and suppose that God has opened a ledger account with us, and employed the angels as His book-keepers. God, "whose understanding is infinite," has no need to keep books, for "all things are open and naked to Him with whom we have to do," and He will hold us to a strict account for even every idle word or thought, and "will try every man's work of what sort it is." But if we turn to Jer. xvii. 1, we shall see that these books are our own hearts: "The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond; it is graven upon the table of *their* heart, and upon the horns of *your* altars." Thus we see plainly that it is our own hearts that will condemn us for all the bad deeds that we committed while in the body. *Memory* will be the book that will be used at the

judgment, as we have a hint in the case of Dives and Lazarus: "Son, *remember* that thou in thy lifetime hadst thy good things, and Lazarus evil things," and I ask the reader whether he has ever forgotten a bad deed that he has done in his life? The experience of every honest heart is that the more we try to forget a bad or mean act the closer it sticks to us; it is indelibly written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond, on the tablet of our hearts. "For God shall bring every work into judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil." (Eccl. xii. 14.) "For there is nothing hid, *save it should* be manifested; neither was anything made secret, but that it should come to light." (Mark iv. 22, R. V.) "Each man's work shall be made manifest, for they shall declare it, because it is revealed in fire." (1 Cor. iii. 13, R. V.)

Now we see it is idle to think that anything that is impressed upon the memory is ever obliterated. We may seem to forget things here, but it is only the temporary loss of power to recall for the moment the thing which we say we have forgotten. We have the testimony of men who were rescued

from drowning, who, when resuscitated, said that the thought of everything that they had done in their life came rushing into the mind with the velocity of lightning; and there is no doubt but that when the soul is freed from the trammels of the body, its capacities and activities will be immeasurably enhanced, and that it will acquire knowledge by intuition *ad infinitum.* For, as St. Paul says, in 1 Cor. xiii. 12 (R. V.), "For now we see in a mirror, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I have been known."

What a trying ordeal this is for the mind of man to contemplate; who would be willing to have his heart revealed here to his most intimate friend? but then "each man's work will be made manifest: for they shall declare it, because it is revealed in fire." Dear reader, let us entreat you ever to have and exercise a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man, so that when we shall appear before the judgment-seat of Christ we may be accepted of Him, having our hearts sprinkled by the blood of Christ, and our conscience purged from dead works; to serve the living God; and that we

may be presented by Him faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, and not have occasion to "say to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb."

CONSUMMATION OF THE AGES.

It is in accordance with reason and philosophy that every material thing that has had a beginning must have an end; for there can be no end without a beginning, and no beginning without an end. And we know from the Scriptures that the earth has had a beginning (Gen i. 1): "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth;" therefore it must have an end; but when that end is to come "no man knoweth, nor the angels in heaven, but God only."

Perhaps there is no subject in the Bible so indefinitely stated, and, we may add, none that men have been so anxious to know, as to the time when the world would cease to move in its course. If we go back to the time when Christ was on earth, we find this same curiosity displayed on the part of His

disciples: "Master, tell us, what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?"

He evades the direct answer by answering them thus: "Take heed that no man lead you astray;" and goes on to tell them that many false prophets will arise, and if they do not take heed they will lead them astray. So it has been ever since, down to the present time, for every few years there have been some false prophets, who have alarmed superstitious people with their startling announcements that the world is about coming to an end. "But the end is not yet."

Now let us see what the Scriptures really tell us about *Eschatology*.

There are many passages of Scripture which have been used by the Second Adventists on this subject, and if read literally these seem to teach that the time is approaching when Christ will come personally in the clouds of heaven, with the angels, and with the sounding of a great trumpet; and the world is to be dissolved with fervent heat, etc.

We endeavored to show in our arguments on the resurrection and the judgment that most of these passages of Scripture used in support of the visible

personal coming of Christ and the destruction of the world are figurative expressions (which abound in the Bible) to express spiritual things; and, in fact, that the greater part of the Bible is made up of types, and symbols, and tropes, which style of speech obtained in the early periods, and prevails even to this day among the Orientals. Losing sight of this fact is, no doubt, the reason why so many errors have crept into the church; for, as we had occasion to remark in former articles, if we persist in reading the Bible *literally* we get into inextricable confusion, and can prove from Scripture almost anything, no matter how absurd it may be.

We will now notice some passages of Scripture which seemingly speak of the destruction of the material world, and in doing this we will necessarily be obliged to repeat much which we have said before in treating of the resurrection and the judgment.

We quote first from 2 Peter iii. 10: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

Here is a strong passage, and if read literally it does teach the imminent and complete destruction of the earth and all things therein; but if we read it in connection with the context, we see that Peter is warning the people against false teachers who were preaching damnable heresies, "walking after their own lusts," and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." Therefore be not alarmed at these preachers of righteousness and the judgment to come, but enjoy the world and "fulfil the lusts of the flesh;" "eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die."

A very enticing teaching this for the carnally minded, of which we have an intimation in this chapter that these people were so, for we read in chapter ii. 14–15, that some unstable souls were beguiled and forsook the right way, and went astray, following the way of Balaam, who loved the ways of unrighteousness, but was rebuked for his iniquity by a dumb ass.

He then goes on to warn them of the evil consequences which would follow if they listened to the

enticing and seductive words of these corrupt teachers, assuring them, that although judgment against an evil work may not be speedily executed, yet it was sure to overtake them, like the judgments executed against the wicked inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, and reminds them of the antediluvians, who, being warned by Noah of the impending ruin that would overtake them unless they repented, yet mocked and despised Noah's warning for one hundred and twenty years; but in due time the floods came, and the rain descended and destroyed all except those who were in the Ark of Safety.

Now, although this passage that we have quoted may have reference to the final dissolution of the *universe*, yet we do not think it was the chief thought that the Apostle Peter wished to impress upon the minds of the people to whom he wrote, for he says in the next verse, "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?"

Now if the apostle meant a literal destruction by fire of the heavens and the earth, it would not surely be a thing to be earnestly desired by them, as he enjoins upon them; but he goes on in the next verse, "Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless."

Now we begin to see the reason why they should earnestly desire and look for the coming of the day of God, viz., because of the *promise* of a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, and that they may be found of Him in peace without spot and blameless.

Now if we turn to Isa. lxv. 17, 18, we see that God had given this promise of a new heaven and new earth:

"For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come to mind. But be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy." Now we see

cause for rejoicing, (*i.e.*) Jerusalem (the church) was to be redeemed from the bondage of sin and idolatry into which she had fallen, and be established in new principles of righteousness, and Zion shall put on her strength and her beautiful garments of righteousness, and "break forth into joy; for the Lord hath comforted His people, He hath redeemed Jerusalem" (the church).

This is the new heavens and new earth which God had promised to create, and which was accomplished after the old Jewish church had come to an end, and Christ had established a new church (*i.e.*, the Christian church), with new rules or principles, which are so much superior that the "former shall not be remembered, nor come to mind." These new principles on which the Christian church is established are given in Matt. v., vi., vii. chapters, called "Christ's Sermon on the Mount." Again we read in Ps. lxxv. 3, "The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved. I bear up the pillars of it." Mark you, this passage does not say the earth shall be dissolved at some future time, but *are dissolved.* Again we read in Isa. li. 16, "And I have put my words in thy mouth, and have covered thee in the shadow of

mine hand, that I may plant the heavens and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people."

Now we do not suppose any one will insist upon a literal reading of this passage, for it would be contrary to common sense to suppose that God would plant the heavens and lay foundations for a new earth in order to put His words in their mouths, but he merely intended to instill into them new heavenly principles and lay foundations for a new moral earth, rendering them fit for God to say unto Zion, Thou art my people. A similar passage is found in Ps. lxxxii. 5, "They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in the darkness; all the foundations of the earth are out of course." Now surely no one will suppose by the phrase "All the foundations of the earth are out of course" that it means the material earth. The people were in darkness, so that they could not understand spiritual things, therefore the foundations of the *moral* earth were out of course. And just so it is with all whose spiritual eyes are darkened by ignorance and sin; their foundations are out of course.

There are many passages in the Scriptures which

speak of the last days "and the end of the world," which by careful reading and comparing with correlative passages will be seen to have reference to the end of one dispensation and the beginning of a new dispensation.

We will quote a few of them in order to demonstrate that this is the case, and first we quote Heb. ix. 26, "For then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."

Now it must be obvious to every dispassionate mind that the phrase in this passage, "since the foundation of the world," and "the end of the world," is not susceptible of a literal reading, but has reference to the foundation of the Adamic church, to the end of the Jewish church.

The apostle in this and previous chapters is contrasting the old Jewish ritualistic church (which was but a shadow of better things to come) with the new Christian church, and at length rehearses the burdensome rites and sacrifices which in themselves "could not make the comers thereunto perfect," "but now once in the end of the world hath He

appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself," showing plainly the superiority of the new over the old covenant or dispensation.

The next passage we will quote is in 1 Cor. x. 11: "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." This passage shows us still more plainly that by the phrase "the ends of the world" is meant the end of the Jewish church; for the church in the wilderness was the pattern from which a better form of church was to be constructed, and all things that happened unto them was written for our admonition.

We will now quote from Acts ii. 17: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams." Now if the reader will turn to the second chapter of Joel, twenty-eighth verse, he will see that this passage is a quotation of the prophecy of Joel, which was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, and which are the "last days" spoken of, and had no reference to the end of the material world.

This fact is made still more obvious by the Apostle Paul in Heb. i. 1, 2: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds." The reader will notice *these* last days, not *the* last day.

We will now notice the last phrase of the passage we have quoted from 2 Peter iii. 10, viz., "The elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

Every studious reader of the Bible must have noticed the frequent mention that is made of fire in the Scriptures where it speaks of the destruction of the wicked or evil in a generic sense. Out of Christ "God is a consuming fire." Christ says, in Luke xii. 49, "I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?" What earth? Why, of course, the *moral* earth. We read, also, in Mal. iii. 2, 3, "But who can abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap. And He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of

silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness."

Now we see this is the method by which God tries His people ("And the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is"), just as the refiner of silver tries the metal of what sort it is; and it is a comforting thought for those who are in the furnace of affliction to know that God only afflicts His children for the purpose of purging away the dross, and purifying them, as silver is purified by fire; and as the refiner sits and watches his metal, as soon as he sees his image reflected in the molten silver (which is an indication that the silver is purified), he immediately takes it out of the furnace; so God takes us out of the fiery trial just as soon as we reflect His image by bringing us to Him in humble submission to His will, "that we may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." This is disciplinary trial.

But the Scriptures speak of another and more severe judgment by fire. When the disciplinary trial fails to accomplish the beneficent end of God to reclaim the backslider, then God gives them over

to a reprobate mind, to work their own destruction, as we read in Christ's own words in John xv. 6, "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." Again, Matt. iii. 12, "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Also, Matt. xiii. 50, "And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." Matt. vii. 19, "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." We might adduce many more passages of like import, but we think this will suffice to show that fire is the symbol which the Scriptures use to represent the destruction that will come upon the incorrigibly wicked; and that when the Bible speaks of the destruction of the earth or the world, it means not the material earth or world but the *moral* world, or the wicked inhabitants of the earth. As we read in 2 Peter, iii. 7, "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of

ungodly men." Now no one will suppose that God is reserving all the heavenly bodies (which are innumerable) and the material earth for destruction by fire because of the wickedness of ungodly men; what have the heavenly bodies or the earth done to merit such a complete annihilation? Is the earth or the stars responsible for the wickedness of ungodly men? Preposterous; it is this reading the Scriptures *literally* which has been the occasion of so much scepticism, and caused the enemies of religion to blaspheme all that is sacred and holy in the Bible.

"The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life."

Now we think we have said enough on this subject to demonstrate to every dispassionate mind that the general notion that the material heavens and the earth are to be destroyed by fire on account of the wickedness of ungodly men is erroneous, and cannot be proved by the Scriptures if read in a spiritual sense, which is the only true way to read the Bible. Christ said to His disciples, "My words are life, and they are spirit."

But some will say, Was not the antediluvian world destroyed by water because of the wickedness of the people? and why should not God destroy

this earth by fire? We answer, The material world was not destroyed, but the moral creation was; therefore we argue that the incorrigibly wicked moral creation will be destroyed by fire unquenchable.

It is sheer folly to speculate upon the dissolution of the earth, of which we have so little information. The only definite statement we have in the Scriptures is in Rev. x. 5, 6: "And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by Him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer."

Then cometh the end, but when or how "no man knoweth, nor the angels, but God only."

CONCLUSION.

ASSUMING that you have read carefully and dispassionately this little book on the "Mysteries of Godliness," allow us to ask you, dear impenitent reader, what is "the conclusion of the whole matter" as regards yourself in relation to your soul's salvation.

In the first place permit us to ask you, Do you believe in a future state of existence? If not, then we have nothing more to say: all appeals or arguments concerning your soul's eternal destiny would be in vain; then the death of the body ends all, and you die as the beasts that perish. And permit us to add that the lower animals have the advantage of you, for they are all happy and content with their life, but *you are not;* and we appeal to your inner consciousness to say whether it is not so; and we are compelled in verity to say in Christ's own words that it were "better for you that you had not been born" than to have had an existence with all the possibilities of an immortal life before you, but sadly

missed the mark, and have nothing before you but outer darkness and despair.

But to you who do believe that there is a future state of existence beyond this life, we have hope in addressing you, and sincerely trust that the arguments presented in this book will not have been written in vain; for we assure you, dear reader, that this work was not undertaken without much prayerful consideration, and an earnest desire to do some good in the Master's name.

The author knows how to sympathize with you, having experienced your honest doubts himself concerning some of the dogmas held by the Church, which by reason of apparent inconsistencies as contained in the creeds formulated by fallible men, have caused such disturbances in his mind as impelled him to search the Scriptures for himself, to see whether these things were so or not, and who, after thirty years of sedulous reading and study, is happy to say that by the illumination of the Spirit of Truth he has been delivered from all perplexing doubts concerning the great questions appertaining to the soul's spiritual and eternal destiny; and if this feeble effort of his should, by the blessing of God, produce

like results in you, dear reader, it would give him unspeakable pleasure, being convinced that if the great cardinal doctrines of the system of the Christian religion were elucidated in the light of reason, science, and the Scriptures, there would be more believers in it, and this has been the aim of the author to do in this little work. As to how he has succeeded in this respect you must judge for yourself.

We have been treating of mysteries, but not the least of the mysteries which meets us in our daily walk and conversation is the mystery of the obstinacy of thoughtful men's minds, antagonizing themselves against Christianity, as if it was something to be dreaded and avoided, whereas a little consideration would show them that their soul's eternal destiny is involved in it.

Some years ago when gold was discovered in California, and as soon as the news was published abroad, men became excited with the idea of gaining riches without the slow process of toil, and hastened with pick and shovel and pan, making long and perilous pilgrimages, at the risk of health and life, across an uninhabited country, subjected to all man-

ner of discomfort, and all for the purpose of gaining a little sordid gold, and riches which perish in the using; but tell them of more enduring riches, "the Pearl of great price," and they will turn away with disdain, uninterested in you, as if you were taunting them. Is not this a mystery? "I speak as to the wise,—judge ye what I say."

If you have read the article on God's sovereignty and man's free agency, you must have seen that the responsibility of your soul's eternal interests depends upon *your choice*, and if you are eventually lost you will have no one to blame but yourself. How can you endure the thought of being lost! lost! and being associated with the damned! all the vile and wicked spirits in an endless hell of torment and misery, "where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched;" and then to reflect and suffer the agony of that fearful word, remorse! remorse! I might have been saved from this torment of hell if I had only heeded the warnings given me in time, but I would not; I have set at naught all the counsels given me, and now I am tormented in this flame. "Oh what eternal horrors hang around the second death!"

Think not this is a fancy sketch to frighten you and work on your fears; no, my friend. If what you have been reading in this book be truths, to which, we take for granted, you have given your assent, then this must be the inevitable outcome of those who neglect the great salvation which God has provided for you. This matter of your soul's salvation is an intensely practical and personal one for you to consider, and you must attend to it yourself; friends may counsel you, and entreat with you, but *you must act yourself.* We have endeavored in the various articles in this book to show you the way to come to Christ, to whom alone you must go for salvation, for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we can be saved except the name of Jesus, *our Saviour.* We have also shown you that God has done all He possibly could do in the redemptive scheme of salvation, and it only remains for you to do your part in working out your own salvation. *Will you do it?*

Were it not the lamentable, undeniable fact which confronts us every day of our lives we should not believe that it requires so much persuasion to induce sinners to accept so free salvation as is offered in the

Gospel; but so it is; and God, who knows the obstinacy of the human heart, out of pity for us in our lost and ruined condition, came down to earth and became a man in order to gain our confidence, and lift us up out of our fallen nature by taking upon Himself our sins and the curse incurred by us, did actually suffer all the penalty Himself in our stead.

That you may more fully realize this fact go with us, dear friend, first to Gethsemane and behold the Saviour.

Sorrowful even unto death, being burdened with the sins of the world, hear Him praying: "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," but it was not possible. He must drink it to the dregs, for it was for this purpose that He came into the world, and having no response His agony of suffering became more intense, until He sweat as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground. He goes again to a secluded place in the garden and prays again, "O, my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, *Thy will be done.*" Then an angel comes to comfort Him in the stillness of the night; but lo! see down the road; what means that glimmering of lights in the distance?

Hark! We hear the clashing of arms and the rough tramp of feet as it were soldiers coming up the hill; nearer and nearer they come until in full vision; we behold they are a band of Roman soldiers, armed with swords and staves. But for what purpose have these soldiers come at this hour of the night? Can it be there are any thieves or robbers here to arrest? Besides, there is Judas, one of Christ's own disciples. This is strange. Let us follow and see what they mean to do. Onward they go through the labyrinth of trees, when suddenly they come to a halt, and a voice is heard,—"Whom seek ye?" A back movement is made, and they fall flat on their faces to the ground. Again He asked them, "Whom seek ye?" They answered Him, "Jesus of Nazareth." Then Judas, according to a prearranged plan, stepped forward and saluted Him with a kiss. "Hail, Master!" This was the signal by which they were to know Him whom they sought. So they bound Him and led him forth to Caiaphas the High Priest. But Peter could not stand this, and under the impulse of his feelings drew his sword and cut off the ear of the servant of the High Priest. But Jesus rebuked him, and commanded that he should put up his

sword into its scabbard, for if He chose He could command twelve legions of angels, and there was no power on earth that could take Him against His will.

But He must needs go to Jerusalem, so we will follow and see what further troubles await Him there. So after they had bound Him they led Him forth down the steep and rugged road across the Brook Kedron to Caiaphas the High Priest. But you ask, What does this mean? Why did Judas, one of His own disciples, so shamefully betray Him into the hands of His enemies? And His other disciples who professed such ardent attachment to Him as even to suffer death for Him, why do they not rally now and rescue Him out of their hands? Why have they all forsaken Him and fled like a band of craven cowards, and He is left *alone* to withstand the gibes and jeers of the rabble crowd, and the false accusations of His persecutors? Ah, dear friend, this was all to fulfil the Scriptures. Isaiah said hundreds of years ago that "He trod the wine-press alone," and did not Jesus say at the Supper last evening that one of His own disciples would betray Him, and that the others would forsake Him

when the trying moment came? and even that ardent, valiant Peter, who in his impetuosity cut off the ear of the servant of Caiaphas at the first attempt at arrest, even he did cower and deny Him before a little maid before cock-crowing this morning.

But here we are at the house of Caiaphas the High Priest, who, with the blood-thirsty Sanhedrim, have sat up all night awaiting the arrival of his emissaries with their prisoner, who are all ready to hear or rather to condemn the prisoner without a formal trial, for they had prejudged the cause, and had made up their minds in advance that He must die; for "they hated Him without a cause." Now they go on with their mock trial. Caiaphas, addressing Jesus, asked Him "of His disciples and of His doctrine." Jesus answered him, "I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue and in the temple whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing."

Then the whole council of chief priests sought false witnesses to testify against Jesus, and many came; some said one thing and some another, so as yet there was no definite accusation; "but afterward came two, and said, This man said, I am able

to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days." Here is a grave charge indeed—and perverted at that—on which to try a man for his life; but anything will do to begin with, for it is a foregone conclusion with them that He must be put to death this day; and we have no time to lose, for it is already the dawn of the morning.

The High Priest becoming impatient, "stood up, and said unto Him, Answerest thou nothing? But Jesus held His peace." Of course: what accusation have they brought against Him that calls for any reply on His part? Jesus had on one occasion publicly said unto them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." "But He spake of the temple of His body," signifying by this His death and resurrection; but this poor, ignorant, deluded witness perverted His meaning, and it would be like as Jesus said on another occasion,—casting pearls before swine to make any reply to this silly accusation.

But the High Priest failing in this first attempt to find anything by which to convict Jesus, makes another onslaught thus: "I adjure Thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ,

the Son of God." Now here is a question which Jesus is bound to reply to, and which He has on all fitting occasions publicly announced, and which was testified to by the Father at His baptism and transfiguration by a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son; hear ye Him." So "Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said,"—*i.e.*, I am the Christ, I am the Messiah of whom the prophet Isaiah wrote, "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth." "Then the High Priest rent his garments, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? Behold, now ye have heard the blasphemy, what think ye? They answered and said, He is worthy of death."

Now they think they have got Him on a charge of blasphemy, making Himself equal with God; but the trouble now is, they have no law by which to put Him to death except by stoning, and that will not suit their purpose; besides, stoning is not severe enough to wreak their devilish hatred on Him. We must see if we cannot trump up a charge by which we can deliver Him over to the Roman governor, for the Romans have a penalty for capital crimes which

is more shameful than stoning. But what charge shall we prefer? He has said that He was the Christ, the Son of God, but the Roman governor cares not for that or our religion; the Romans regard us Jews as a sect of religious fanatics; so this charge will not avail to make out a case of capital offence. Just here a happy thought strikes one of the rabbis. He has said that He was the Messiah, and you know that the Messiah which we look for to come is to be our king; who is to deliver us out of the yoke of bondage to the Romans, and re-establish our nationality. So it is only necessary to say to the Roman governor, Here is a man who claims to be the King of the Jews, and of course that is treason against Cæsar, and he will be bound to convict Him and put Him to death by crucifixion, which is the most horrid and shameful death that can be inflicted on a man, and is only resorted to in cases of extreme turpitude.

Now it is morning, and this is the preparation day for the Sabbath, to-morrow. So they bind Jesus, and in haste "they led Him away and delivered Him up to Pilate, the Roman governor." Now, dear friend, let us follow and see what next they will do

unto our Saviour. We arrive at the magnificent royal palace of Pilate. There is no time lost in preparing for the hearing, for Pilate is already in the judgment hall; but these self-righteous persecutors of Jesus do not enter into the palace lest they might be defiled by coming in contact with the heathen Procurator, and then they could not eat the passover. So they stay outside on the tessellated pavement. "Pilate therefore went out unto them and said, What accusation bring ye against this man? They answered and said unto him, if this man were not an evil-doer we should not have delivered Him up unto thee. Pilate therefore said unto them, Take him yourselves, and judge Him according to your law. The Jews said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death."

Dear friend, did you hear that? Now we see the reason why these blood-thirsty religious bigots bring Jesus to the Roman governor, viz., to do that which they had the *will* but not the *power* to do. But what is the accusation ye bring against this man? asked Pilate again. "And they began to accuse Him, saying, We found this man perverting our nation and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar,

and saying that He Himself is Christ a King." Now we see how they have improved on the accusation first agreed upon, by adding that He was a stirrer up of sedition and disloyal to Cæsar. Now they have a charge which, if substantiated, must eventuate in conviction for high treason, the penalty for which is death by crucifixion.

Now when Pilate heard that the indictment was for treason against Cæsar he began to take more interest in the case, and leaving the crowd outside he "entered again into the palace, and called Jesus unto him," for the purpose of examining Him privately, "and said unto Him, Art thou the King of the Jews?" "And He answering saith unto him, Thou Sayest." Mark, the question which Pilate put to Jesus was simply, art thou the *King of the Jews?* not dost thou claim to be a king in opposition to Cæsar, for Pilate cared little about the Jews or their ceremonial laws or customs, but merely to keep them in subjection to his rule, and would do anything to please them that was not inconsistent with Cæsar's jurisdiction, therefore His confession that He was the King of the Jews was no cause for alarm. Besides He told him in the private interview that "His

kingdom is not of this world," and what does a sensuous-minded heathen know or care about a spiritual kingdom? For when Pilate had a good opportunity of learning something about Christ's spiritual kingdom in private when he asked Jesus if He was a king, He answered, "I am a king. To this end have I been born, and to this end I am come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. Pilate saith unto him, What is truth?" O what a pity that he did not stay a little longer, and he would have got his answer from one who is truth itself. But "when he had said this he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find no crime in Him."

Now, friends, you ask us if Pilate, after two examinations, says he finds *no crime* in Him, why does he not now discharge Him at once, as by his own confession *He is innocent* of the accusation the Jews have brought against Him? True, but this Procurator is a weak vacillating minded man, and he is afraid of the Jews, and now see he is going to try the policy of compromising with them by adopting a custom which had long obtained among the Jews

at their passover. Now hear what he proposes to do in order to pacify them and save Jesus from death, and get rid of this troublesome matter. This is what he says to the Jews: "I find no fault in Him. But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?" This was a happy thought on the part of Pilate, but it utterly miscarried and failed of the mark, for it only exasperated the Jews to a more determinate effort to have Jesus put to death. So "they cried out therefore again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber." They would prefer to have a robber released from custody in place of the innocent and gentle Jesus. Any one but Jesus will suit these hard-hearted religious bigots.

Pilate at seeing that his proposition had failed to satisfy the Jews was sorely perplexed, and at this juncture he received a message from his wife, saying, "Have thou nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him." This so worked upon his evil and superstitious conscience that it caused him to make another effort to get them to consent to

have him release Jesus instead of Barabbas. And he asked them again, "Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? And they said Barabbas. Pilate saith unto them, What then shall I do unto Jesus, which is called Christ? They all say, Let Him be crucified. And he said, Why, what evil hath He done? But they cried out exceedingly, saying, Let Him be crucified!" "So when Pilate saw that he prevailed nothing, but rather that a tumult was arising, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this righteous man: see ye to it."

Poor weak-minded, vacillating Pilate! He thinking that he could ease his troubled conscience by resorting to a Jewish custom, by washing his hands before them with water. But this was another failure of his expedients. He would have them to understand that he was innocent of this righteous man's blood, and would throw the responsibility on them, and they are only too eager to take it. For hear their reply to Pilate: "And all the people answered and said, His blood be on us, and on our children."

Oh what a terrible responsibility they assumed in

rejecting their Messiah! and truly His blood has been upon them and on their children, and will continue to be until the restoration of the Jews. And how truly were Christ's own words fulfilled which He spake unto His disciples a year or so before. (Mark viii. 31.) "And he began to teach them that the son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders, and the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed." And also by the Prophet Isaiah hundreds of years before (Isa. liii. 3): "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not." What a marvellous fulfilment of prophecy this was which these hard-hearted Jews were unconsciously enacting. Dear friend, we wish you to notice carefully as they proceed in this trial of our Saviour how wondrously, though unconsciously, every minutia of it was foretold by Christ and the prophets, in order that you may be convinced when the sequel comes that He who is the principal in this tragedy is none other but the Christ, the Son of God.

Now when the Jews saw that Pilate was unwilling to pass sentence of death on one whom *he* could find

no fault in, "they were the more urgent, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, and beginning from Galilee even unto this place." "But when Pilate heard it he asked whether the man was a Galilean? And when he knew that He was of Herod's jurisdiction he sent Him unto Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem in these days."

Now this circumstance afforded Pilate another chance to rid himself of this troublesome business, so he gladly sent Jesus to Herod, whose palace was close by. And now let us follow and see what Herod will do, and whether he will allow such indignities to Jesus as Caiaphas and Pilate did in their courts. "Now when Herod saw Jesus he was exceeding glad, for he was of a long time desirous to see Him, because he had heard concerning Him, and he hoped to see some miracle done by Him. And He questioned Him in many words, but He answered him nothing." "And the chief priests and the scribes stood, vehemently accusing Him."

Herod was exceedingly glad to have an opportunity of having a little sport with one of whom he heard so much in Galilee, whose fame as a miracle-worker was spread abroad throughout his jurisdic-

tion, and now as he has Him in his power before him he is desirous of having Jesus amuse him and his court with some of those miracles of which he had heard so much. So he plies Him with many words to induce Him to perform some of His wonderful miracles, but all to no effect. "He answered him nothing."

Chagrined at the utter failure of their hopes to get Jesus to work miracles to amuse their idle curiosity, they turn on Him with the same bitter hatred that they manifested in the courts of Caiaphas and Pilate. "And Herod with his soldiers set Him at naught, and mocked Him, and arraying Him in gorgeous apparel sent Him back to Pilate." And here let us notice a little touch of human nature and irony as the narrative reads, "And Herod and Pilate became friends with each other that very day, for before they were at enmity between themselves." These two potentates were bitter *enemies* as regards *worldly* matters, but so soon as a question of spiritual interest is raised they at once strike hands and become friends, and make common cause against Christ. And so it has ever been with the perverse heart of man. "The light has come into the world,

but men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." "The natural heart is at enmity against God." The whole world is divided into two classes, viz.: *for* Christ and *against* Christ.

Now they bring Jesus back again to Pilate, for they are particularly anxious that the Roman governor should convict Him, in order that He may be crucified, and nothing short of the ignominious cross will satisfy their brutal hatred of the meek and lowly Jesus.

Pilate was disappointed in seeing the crowd returning with Jesus, as he had hoped that by sending Him to Herod that he had got rid of this troublesome trial, and he is a little irritated, and "called together the chief priests and the rulers of the people, and said unto them, Ye brought unto me this man as one that perverteth the people, and behold, I, having examined Him before you, found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse Him. No, nor yet Herod, for he sent Him back unto us; and behold, nothing worthy of death hath been done by Him."

Now you ask us, dear friend, is it not strange that after even that wicked Herod having found no

fault in Jesus worthy of death that Pilate does not acquit Him? Yes, it is strange, and if Pilate had any moral fortitude in him he would do so; but he is afraid of the Jews, lest if he should release Jesus they would stir up an insurrection among the people, and the news having reached the ears of Cæsar, his master at Rome, might incur his displeasure and consequent removal; and what signifies the sacrifice of one innocent life of a hated Jew to the peaceful relations with one to whom his is dependent for his position in the Roman government?

Pilate, therefore, in his dilemma resolves upon one more expedient to appease the wrath of the Jews against Jesus, by a mode of punishment extremely barbarous and brutal, so much so that the Roman law interdicted it to be inflicted on a Roman citizen; but as Jesus is a despised Nazarene, the thought occurred to him that it would be a good thing to try scourging; then, surely these hard-hearted Jews will relent, and consent to a release of Jesus. Pilate, therefore, after once more stating to the crowd that he found no fault in Him worthy of death, commanded his soldiers to take Jesus and scourge Him.

Now, dear friend, if you can bear to witness one of the most barbarous and revolting scenes that the cruelty of man ever devised for inflicting punishment on a fellow-being, we will follow these rough soldiers into the prætorium or court-yard. Now the soldiers strip Him and bare His back to the waist, and bending Him forward over a support, one of the soldiers assigned to perform this horrid duty took a scourge made of a number of ropes or leather twisted into thongs, with pieces of acorn-shaped lead fastened at the ends, and as these hard-hearted Roman soldiers were ever ready to vent their spleen on the hated Jews, this was a good opportunity for them; and as they had no specific command as to the number of stripes they should inflict, they only ceased when they tired of the cruel performance. So excruciating were the sufferings of scourging that some could not endure it, and died of exhaustion. Yet Jesus endured it without complaint or a single murmur from His lips. You say, Is not this awfully cruel and wicked on the part of these heathen soldiers? Yes. Verily, it is. But the prophet Isaiah said hundreds of years ago that Christ was to suffer all this cruel treatment *for our*

sins (Isa. liii. 5). "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed." It is well to bear this in mind, dear friend, for however difficult it may be to realize, it is a fact, as we have tried to show you in our article on the "Atonement,"—which we trust you have not forgotten,—that Jesus Christ is *our sin bearer.*

Well, are these heathen soldiers not content yet with the severe scourging they have inflicted on the meek and suffering Jesus? No; they must indulge in a little episode at mockery. They heard Him say or acknowledge before Pilate that He was a king. So they gathered together their band, and stripped Him of His abba, or outer garment, and put on Him one of the soldier's scarlet cloaks, while another makes it his business to run out in the garden and pluck some twigs from a thorn-bush and wreathe them in the form of a crown, then press the sharp points of the thorns into His head; another gets a long reed and places that in His right hand for a sceptre. Now "they bowed down before Him and mocked Him, saying, Hail, King of

the Jews!" and this is not all yet, for "they spat upon Him, and took the reed and smote Him on the head."

When they get through with their insults and indignities heaped upon Jesus, they bring Him out again before Pilate and the people, wearing the derisive crown of thorns and the mock attire of a king. Exhausted and worn by the horrible scourging at the hands of these ruthless soldiers, Pilate makes another effort to prevail upon the Jews to consent to His release. The pitiable sight of Jesus has now softened even the hard heart of this heathen judge, and, surely, if there is a grain of humanity left in the hearts of these religious Jews they will now relent. So "Pilate went out again and saith unto them, Behold, I bring Him out to you, that ye may know that I find no crime in Him." And Pilate directing the attention of the Jews to Jesus who stood beside him,—Behold the man! He appeals to their humanity,—behold the piteous condition of the man! Are you not satisfied now? Has He not been punished enough, especially as I have found no fault in Him? But nothing will satisfy these religious bigots but His

blood. So to the surprise of Pilate they cried out, saying, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" "Pilate saith unto them, Take Him yourselves and crucify Him, for I find no crime in Him." Pilate did not wish to be made their tool to do their bidding, so he says to them, *Take Him yourselves* and crucify Him if you will, but I will not be your tool to do that which is repugnant to me.

But Caiaphas, the spokesman of the Jews, was more than a match for Pilate, and they have an answer ready for him: "The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by that law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God." "When Pilate, therefore, heard this saying he was the more afraid; and he entered into the palace again, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer." "Pilate therefore saith unto Him, Speakest thou not unto me? Knowest thou not that I have power to release Thee and have power to crucify Thee?" Pilate was incensed at the silence of Jesus, and his pride was touched at receiving no answer, and he reminds Him that His life is in his hands; that he has power to release Him and power to crucify Him. But Jesus also

reminds him that the power which he had was given him by His Father from heaven, and therefore he acted under a superior power, and was unconsciously fulfilling the decrees of the Divine council; and although his irresolute conduct was reprehensible, yet, therefore they that had delivered Him unto Pilate had greater sin. "Upon this Pilate sought to release Him." But the Jews quickly seeing that Pilate was about to follow the dictates of his own conscience and release Jesus, were ready to ensnare him in a new trap; so they the more vehemently cried out to Pilate, "If thou release this man thou art not Cæsar's friend; every one that maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar." This was too much for the fickle-minded Pilate. He could not endure the thought of being classed among the enemies of Cæsar, for it was to him that he owed his position as Procurator, and any imputation of disloyalty to Cæsar would be fatal to him, and eventuate in a removal from office and perhaps banishment in disgrace. So somewhat angered at being so often caught in the toils of these wily Jews, "he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat," and sarcastically "said unto the Jews, Behold

your king! They therefore cried, Away with Him, away with Him! crucify Him!" But Pilate becoming more ironic, What! "shall I crucify your king?" "The chief priests answered, We have no king but Cæsar." This was too much for Pilate; they have gained their ends. So "he delivered Him unto them to be crucified."

And now, dear friend, we know you must be heart-sick and tired of these heart-rending scenes,—as we have been in attendance all night, and it is now nine o'clock in the morning,—but when we invited you to go with us to Gethsemane we had it in our mind to take you from thence to Jerusalem; and now, as Pilate has delivered Jesus up to be crucified, we are desirous that you should bear witness of that which we told you before, viz., that God has done all He could for the salvation of sinners; therefore let us follow the crowd with Jesus to Calvary,—which is a hillock outside of the gates,—where the crucifixion is to take place, and then, after seeing the end, we are sure you will agree with us.

It will take the soldiers perhaps an hour to get ready for the march, for they have two robbers condemned to death in the prison, and in order to make

the execution yet more shameful they are going to crucify them with Jesus, one on the right side and the other on the left; and we tell you, friend, in advance, that it will require all the moral fortitude you possess to witness unmoved the tragedy of the crucifixion.

Now Pilate's cohorts, under the command of the centurion, are ready for the march. A quaternion of soldiers is assigned to each one of the victims as executioners and guards to prevent any attempt at rescue, and a squad of soldiers in the front and rear; the condemned victims in the middle. Jesus has been divested of the mock scarlet cloak, and His abba put on. Around the necks of each of the victims is suspended a white painted board inscribed with large black letters stating the crimes for which they are to suffer the penalty of death; and now they move off on the sad march to the place of execution, followed by a great crowd of people, some for the purpose of glutting the hatred which they bear to the meek and innocent One, and a few out of sympathy.

They had not proceeded far in the narrow, dusty streets, with the hot vertical sun beating down on

their heads, before one of the guards noticed that Jesus—faint and worn, and back lacerated by the cruel scourging—could not keep pace with the company on the march, so as there happened to be a man coming from the country standing by the wayside by the name of Simon, of Cyrene, they laid hold on him and compelled him to bear the cross-beam after Jesus. Whether this was done out of compassion, or to hasten their march, we do not know, but may we not, dear friend, from this incident apply to ourselves a grain of comfort, viz., that in our cross-bearing we do not carry it alone, but that Christ helps us to bear it?

Soon following this incident another of a more pathetic character occurred. By this time the inhabitants of the city had been notified that Jesus was delivered up to be crucified, and they poured in from the cross streets great multitudes of people, both men and women, who bewailed and lamented for Him out of true sympathy, for no one, except they had hearts of stone, could witness this sad sight without weeping. This expression of sympathy, coming from the source it did, was a grateful episode to the tender heart of Jesus, who had heard nothing

but the ribald curses and reproaches of the dignitaries of the Jews, as well as the rabble crowd, and must have touched His heart, for His lips had been almost silent during the mock-trial, and He had submitted to the cruel scourging without a murmur; but now He speaks from His heart a far deeper sympathy for them than they had any appreciation of, and says unto them, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children." (*i.e.*) Weep not for Me only, for My sufferings, though intense and heavy to be borne, yet they are momentary, and will soon be over, and I shall enter into My glory which I had with the Father before I came into the world to fulfil this very mission which I am now accomplishing, for it was for the joy that was set before Me that I endure the cross and despise the shame. So weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and your children, (*i.e.*) the calamities that are to come upon Jerusalem for their rejection of the Messiah. I came unto mine own, but they receive me not, and now I endure all these sufferings and indignities heaped upon Me, to redeem you from the bondage of Rabbinism and the burdensome yoke of traditional ritualism, and now I suffer

the ignominious death of the cross by the hands of the very people I came to save! Is not this love beyond degree?

Now, dear friend, we have arrived at Calvary, where you will witness the most awful spectacle that ever was enacted in the history of the world, viz.: The Lord of life and glory, the Creator of the world, put to death by the wicked hands of men, in the most shameful and cruel manner that ever was devised by the ingenuity of man, and at which, as we will see, material nature stood aghast.

Immediately on arrival the executioners take from the necks of the victims the boards on which were written the crimes for which they were condemned, and nail them on the top of the upright post of the cross. Jesus had suspended on His neck the inscription which Pilate had caused to be written in revenge to the Jews for wrenching from him the judgment of crucifixion, and also to ridicule or taunt them for crucifying their rejected king, and this they nailed on the top of His cross. The inscription read,—"Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." But this did not suit the dignitaries of the temple, and forthwith they sent a deputation to

Pilate, saying, Write not the King of the Jews, but that He said, I am King of the Jews. Pilate was not to be influenced any more by these hated Jews, so he merely answered them in the laconic words, "What I have written, I have written."

Now the rough heathen soldiers take Jesus, and after stripping Him of His clothes (except a linen cloth around His loins) stretch Him on the cross which is lying on the ground, and with huge iron nails drive them through the palms of His hands and feet, and then lift Him, nailed to the cross, in an upright position, the lower end planted in the ground, to be gazed and scoffed at by the ribald crowd. While this was being done, and suffering the most excruciating agony, He, regardless of pain, breathes a prayer of forgiveness for these insensible persecutors: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." We ask you, friend, is this human nature? Ah! you say this is divine, for none but a God could do this under such circumstances. This is Godlike. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son to die for us, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life.

One of the soldiers, who seemed to have a little humanity in him, sought to assuage His pain by offering Him a little drugged wine to drink, but He would not taste it. He would not do anything to lessen the agony of the bitter cup which His Father had given Him to drink; therefore He drank it to the very dregs. Now the chief priests passing by Him began to rail on Him, wagging their heads and taunting Him, saying, "Thou that destroyest the temple and buildest it in three days, save Thyself; if Thou art the Son of God come down from the Cross." "He saved others; Himself He cannot save." "He is the King of Israel; let Him now come down from the cross and we will believe on Him." "He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He desireth Him; for He said, I am the Son of God." Oh, friend, He could have come down from the cross. He could have delivered Himself if He would, but if He had done so we could not have been saved; for you remember we heard Him say in the garden of Gethsemane in His prayer: "O, my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, if this cup may not pass away from Me except I drink it, Thy

will be done." It was not possible, therefore, He did not come down from the cross and deliver Himself, but carried out the will of the Father, in offering Himself a willing sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, thereby accomplishing the great work of redemption.

Jesus had been hanging on the cross nearly three hours; meanwhile the soldiers, whose perquisites were the garments of the crucified ones, "took His garments and made four parts, to every soldier a part, and also the coat; now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said therefore to one another, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be." Now, dear friend, we want you to notice again that this trivial incident was also prophesied hundreds of years ago, which is another proof, if you need any more, that Jesus was the Messiah; for although it was customary for the executioners of a crucifixion to take the outer garments as their perquisites, yet this inner seamless robe was *only worn by the priests;* and it is not likely that any officiating priest was ever crucified. You will find this prophecy recorded in twenty-second Psalm, eighteenth verse: "They parted my gar-

ments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots." Is it not marvellous how scrupulously every prophecy concerning Christ was literally fulfilled even to this apparently trivial matter of casting lots for His seamless robe, and that, too, by a band of heathen soldiers, who were so unconsciously fulfilling the Scriptures? Is it not marvellous that after all these corroborating attestations, pointing so unerringly to Christ, that any one should yet doubt that *this Jesus* whom we see crucified is the Messiah?

Jesus, just before expiring, lifting up His eyes and seeing His mother—who had come with the other faithful Marys to witness this sad scene—overwhelmed with grief at seeing the unutterable anguish of her beloved Son, saith unto His mother, "Behold thy Son!" Then turning to His beloved disciple John, who was standing by, "Behold thy mother!" thus providing for His mother a home and a son, and for His disciple a mother.

It was now three o'clock, and Jesus had hung on the cross three hours, and was exhausted by the excruciating pains which He suffered and which even dumb nature itself could not endure, for the sun hid himself, and there was darkness over all the

land during these three ever-memorable hours. And "Jesus knowing that all things are now finished, that the Scripture might be accomplished, bowed His head and gave up His spirit," saying, with a loud voice, "It is finished!" and then, more gently, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit." Immediately the veil of the temple was rent in twain, in token of His finished work, and the end of the Jewish dispensation and the coming in of the new Christian dispensation. Attested also by a great earthquake, and the rending of the hard and stony rocks on which this sad scene was enacted.

As this was the preparation day for the Paschal Sabbath, which was near at hand, and as it was not permitted that dead bodies should remain on the cross over the Sabbath unburied, the Jews sent a request to Pilate that he would order their legs broken that they might be taken away and buried. "The soldiers, therefore, came and brake the legs of the first and of the other which was crucified with Him, but when they came to Jesus and saw that He was dead already they brake not His legs; howbeit one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and straightway there came out blood and water."

This was another incident by which the Scriptures might be fulfilled, viz., "A bone of Him shall not be broken." And again, another Scripture saith, "They shall look on Him whom they pierced."

And now all is over, "And all the multitudes that came together to this sight, when they beheld the things that were done returned smiting their breasts." Truly now they are convinced that this was the Son of God whom they had ignorantly crucified, for many of them believed on Him from that day; even one of the rough, hard-hearted heathen soldiers was compelled to exclaim, "Truly this was a righteous man!"

And now, dear friend, what do you say? Are you convinced now that Jesus was the Son of God? Will you be more obstinate and hard-hearted than these Jews and Roman soldiers? You remember we told you before that God had done all He could do for your salvation. Can you think of anything more, or would you have Him do anything more than you have witnessed He has done? You have seen that sacred head, all radiant with the Divine glory, excoriated with the derisive crown of thorns, and those blessed hands and feet, which were ever exercised

going about doing good and bestowing blessings all around, nailed to the cross with the horrid spikes, and that loving, affectionate heart which prompted Him to leave His throne of glory in the heavens and come down to this poor, sinful world to redeem it from its ruined condition, transfixed with the cruel spear, and then, amidst all this excruciating suffering, inflicted by those whom He came particularly to save, while His blood was streaming from every pore of His body, calmly breathing out the prayer, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." O, friend, if your heart does not melt at such stupendous love as this, allow us to tell you that your heart is harder than those of these Jews, or of these Roman soldiers,—harder than the rocks that rent themselves asunder, harder than the sun that hid himself, harder than impassive nature that shuddered at the sight you have seen.

But we hope for better things from you, dear friend, for we are sure by *your serious countenance* that your heart is touched (as we intimated to you that it would be) at what you have seen and heard, for we are sure that you cannot ever forget it, even if you would. And now, dear friend, we must part,

and if we never meet again on earth, we trust we shall meet in heaven. In the meanwhile we entreat you to seek an interest in Christ's finished work. Remember His last dying words, "IT IS FINISHED!"

THE END.

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